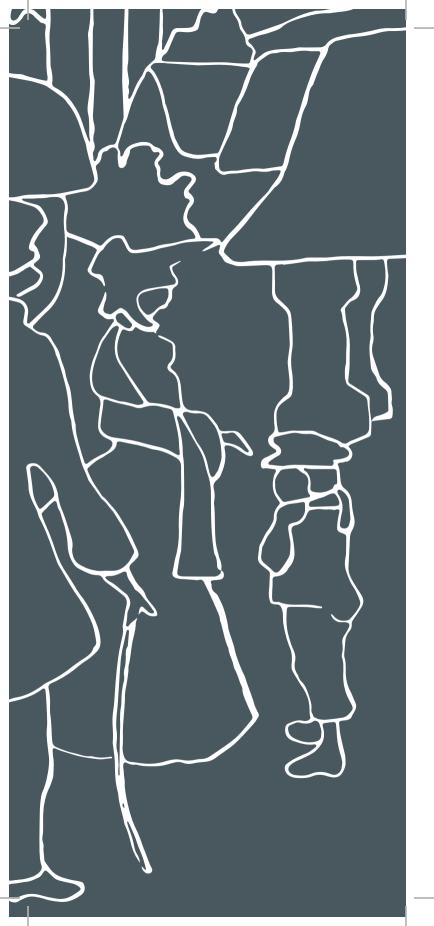
### MUSÉE DE LA SEINE-ET-MARNE L'HOMME ET SON TERRITORE



# A JOURNEY IN COLOUR

Mac Orlan and the painters

MUSÉES DÉPARTEMENTAUX DE SEINE-ET-MARNE 🏟 🔾 🥥 🍘 🍘



# INTRODUCTION

### **PIERRE MAC ORLAN (1882 – 1970)**

The young Pierre Dumarchey was an aspiring painter.

He stencil painted the walls of the future International Exhibition. Between 1901 and 1905 he earned his living as a proof-reader at the Dépêche de Rouen newspaper, an occupation that left him time to paint. In 1905, he composed illustrations for a book by his friend Robert Duquesne: Monsieur Homais voyage, and, for the first time, signed under his pen name, Mac Orlan.

He was soon discharged from military service, and, in late 1905, returned to Montmartre where he was engaged by an "authoress" to ghost-write novels inspired by her travels. Together they visited Naples and Palermo before he again returned to Montmartre, staying this time from 1907 to 1911. He eked out a living writing erotic literature before finally finding a more viable line in comic tales that he illustrated himself for the weekly magazines Le Rire and Le Sourire. He wrote two novels: La maison du Retour écœurant (1912) and Le Rire jaune (1913), followed by his first adventure novel, Chant de l'équipage. In the years after 1920, though the writer replaced the painter, Mac Orlan would say: "When I write, I have the impression that I'm painting."

Throughout his career as a writer, Mac Orlan would take an interest in the work of other painters, irrespective of their celebrity. He wrote some 180 texts on the subject, befriending a number of painters and working some of them into characters in his novels

BEHIND THE PAINTERS, THE MEN, AND FRIENDSHIPS Pierre Mac Orlan enjoyed close relations with a number of artists, many of whom, including Picasso, Vlaminck, and Pascin, he would bump into or visit in Montmartre; others, like Bergevin and Louvrier, he knew in Rouen; Péron, Sévellec and others in Brest. Later in Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin, he would frequent Planson, Landier and many other artists to whom he dedicated prefaces.

He asked some to illustrate his works and, as such, they became partners. Others, like Toulouse-Lautrec, Courbet, Grosz, and Pascin, were the subject of articles, prefaces, or works by the author.

This gallery of portraits and self-portraits tells a story of over 150 years of works by painters, some celebrated, others less so, spanning very wide-ranging styles, but whose artistic worlds and sensibilities, at some point, had an impact on Mac Orlan.

Wherever he was, the writer spent his life in the company of artists who nourished his imagination and literary creativity.

### GUSTAVE COURBET (1819 - 1877)



"Courbet was always inspired, driven by the vigorous sensuality that is the force of natural energies."

### HENRI DE TOULOUSE-LAUTREC (1864 – 1901)



"Lautrec, seated at the table, his legs too short to touch the floor, his thick mouth lost in the curly beard, bowler hat tilted forward over his eyes, somehow absorbing, by endosmosis and capillarity, the gaslight that bathed the dancing girls scattered around for the quadrille, the strident fanfare ushering in Orpheus in the Underworld, the patter of the girls eternally seeking the drink that would draw in a customer, the tightrope

walker silhouette of Valentin [the can-can dancer], the Inverness capes of the regular customers, the tunics of the garde municipal and, presiding over all, from midnight till three in the morning, the equivocal angel of joie de vivre."

### EMILE JOURDAN (1861 - 1931)



"He was tall, slim, keen-eyed, with a ruddy complexion. At 70, decked out in a full tarpaulin hunting outfit and gaiters fit for a painter of the Barbizon generation, he would stride along the Coast, pipe in mouth, Breton shillelagh in hand."

"On the way back from Riec I saw a marvellous spot ... A colour, a delicacy in the greys... Tomorrow, if the weather holds, I'll be off with

my box to do a quick pochade; couldn't be better." Pierre Mac Orlan, Le Chant de l'équipage (1918)

### JACQUES GASTON EMILE VAILLANT (1879-1934)



"We met up in the evening by lamplight. There was Jourdan, who knows Gauguin, Jacques Vaillant, dear old Jacques, preaching a melancholy doctrine before a small population of flip-top bottles, attentive and unstopped..."

Jacques Gaston Emile VAILLANT (1879 – 1934) Self-portrait

Charcoal on paper – 1922 Donated by the Amis du Musée de Pont-Aven – Collection: Musée de Pont-Aven – Inv. 2014.15.2

## JULES PASCIN (1885 - 1930)



"He always wore a stiff, round felt hat, the crown of which bore the stamp of a reputed cap maker. This hat was inseparable from Pascin's silhouette, which I still see between the trees in the orchard, already gilded by autumn. He occasionally visited me in the little village in

the Multien country where I have been living for 30 years. This was a considerable proof of his affection, as he only liked the countryside when it was bathed in the sound of phonographs and pianolas which, at that time, played Josephine Baker's hit Dinah. The young coloured girl was nowhere to be seen beneath the foliage along the banks of the Petit-Morin, customarily haunted by the shadows of Old Corot's nymphs. At the house in Les Archets, Pascin who never travelled without a cortège, only ever met friends." Pierre Mac Orlan

Emil Orlik (1870-1932) - Pascin - Drypoint - 1911 - Metropolitan Museum of Art New-York - Inv. 24.12.8

# MAURICE ASSELIN (1882 - 1947)



"In the shadow of a tree by the sea, a young, meticulously shaven man, soft hat pulled down over his eyes and wearing a thick woollen jersey, was washing a watercolour: a watercolour transparent like a Caledonian seashell, a light, fluent vision filled with that rich oceanic odour with its unforgettable reinvigorating power." Pierre Mac Orlan

Maurice Asselin (1882 – 1947) – Self-portrait – Oil on canvas – 1940 Gift, Collection: Musée de Pont-Aven – Inv. 2002.8.1

## MAURICE DE VLAMINCK (1876 – 1956)



"It was a little later that I caught sight of Vlaminck, around 1901. He was motionless on the riverbank, near the bridge at Chatou. He wasn't painting: he was watching the water, smoking his clay pipe, most certainly a Scouffair. His tall silhouette, that of a boatman from Sluis, was cut out against the

poplars on the other bank [...] Never having entertained hope, he was never in despair." Pierre Mac Orlan

Maurice de VLAMINCK – (1876 – 1956) – Self-portrait Oil on canvas – 1911 Donated by Louise and Michel Leiris, 1984 Musée national d'Art Moderne – Centre Georges Pompidoulnv. AM 1984-677

### GEORGE GROSZ (1893 – 1959)



"George Grosz was the first to show the fantastic which, at nightfall, peopled the big cities with often abominable larvae. He was the first to clothe his characters in transparent costumes that concealed nothing of their sensual or merely dishonest imaginings." Pierre Mac Orlan

# JIM SEVELLEC (1897 – 1971)



"For me, the sight of the colours squeezing from the tubes, the smell of the pigments, the oil and the petrol were subtle fragrances as intoxicating as that of the woman he loves can be for a man." Jim Sévellec

## ANDRÉ PLANSON (1898 – 1981)

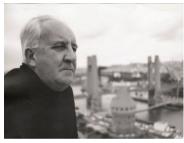


"André Planson entered my house with the physical appearance of a Brie shepherd modified by the practice of rugby and football."

"When, with my stick and my bulldog at my heels, but no servant, I take the path that leads to Ferté-sous-Jouarre via the wood at Vanry, rounding a

spinney, I sometimes spot the silhouette of André Planson. He carries his box on his shoulder as did Courbet. Nothing changes in the attitude of a painter who enters nature. So, quite naturally, I greet him with: "Good day, Monsieur Planson." Pierre Mac Orlan

### PIERRE PERON (1905 - 1988)



"Art is another word for research. I don't like straight roads. I prefer the small paths on which I can dawdle my way to the same destination. To execute my work, I have employed a range of techniques and different tendencies. For

me, my form of expression is a fan with a thousand folds. That is how I am. It's my temperament." Pierre Péron

### HENRI LANDIER (BORN IN 1935)

"Henri Landier, with the golden anchor stitched to the front of his cap, is my neighbour. I have been seeing him often over the last three years and I have gradually been able to enter the world of his thought, the colours of his thought: it is a world that hides away beneath a deceptively learned appearance, that of a young man who works sixteen hours a day, without taking the time to cook himself an egg. This strict regime, which adds efficiency to an artist's gifts, firstly taught him how to draw, in other words to possess the style that always guarantees personality. Under this regime, he has acquired the strength that quite naturally eliminates the misleading damage wrought by easy options." Pierre Mac Orlan

#### AUDIO LABEL:

Excerpts from Pyral records (unique recordings from Mac Orlan's house), on which Pierre Mac Orlan plays the accordion on the following pieces:

Sous les ponts de Paris, a 1900 potpourri, Breton and old songs.



MAC ORLAN PORTRAIT Mac Orlan was secretive. His reputation owed everything to his physical appearance: "The likeable old troubadour of Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin. A face with short features, mischievous eyes. He is short, stocky, solidly built. His parrot is called Dagobert. He is the Scot of Montmartre and of the house in Les Archets. He wears golfing breeches, smokes a pipe and wears a beret with a spirited pompom. His silhouette looks as though it was cut out of a patchwork."

The true author of this faux portrait is Mac Orlan himself. He gradually established this whimsical, picturesque and cordial, but simplistic image of a multi-faceted artist, with a sensibility full of shadow and mist.

Mac Orlan was gifted with a powerful imagination and creative sensibility.

His writing, at once picturesque, droll and anxious, distorted the world towards the absurd. He called this literary construction "social fantastique".

"The practical applications of science merely reinforce these fantastic images by mixing in a new mystery. The brighter the light, the thicker the shadow; it is always in shadow that humanity likes to seek out its anxieties: it is the shadow of the best-lit cities that perhaps best nourishes the strangest larvae".

This modern social fantastique constantly haunts Mac Orlan's imagination and the destiny of his heroes.

There is nothing abstract about his writing. Everything is expressed as facts, gestures, scenery. He is deeply pessimistic. He expresses the absurdity of the human condition as concrete, often comical representations. Imagination mingles with memory.

His stories are pathetic or cruel; there is no tenderness. The tragic ends met by his heroes are dispatched in two lines of prose. His phlegm is light. Neither condemning, nor judgmental. His indifference produces shivers of anxiety.

Based on Ferny Besson, In La revue des deux mondes, 1968 Julius Mordecai Pincas, known as Jules PASCIN (1885-1930) Pierre Mac Orlan Print engraved on wood by Aubert – 1924 – For the book Simone de Montmartre (Paris, NRF, collection: «Une oeuvre, un portrait», 1924) Wide margin print on tinted old Japanese paper – Print 12/25 justified and signed by Pascin and Aubert. – 1987.7.4 – Musée de la Seine-et-Marne Julius Mordecai Pincas, known as Jules PASCIN (1885-1930) Pierre Mac Orlan Original drawing – 1924 – For the book Simone de Montmartre (Paris, NRF, Collection: «Une œuvre, un portrait», 1924) -**Private collection** Julius Mordecai Pincas, known as Jules PASCIN (1885-1930) Pierre Mac Orlan original drawing in black chalk, 1924 – Private collection Julius Mordecai Pincas, known as Jules PASCIN (1885-1930) Pierre Mac Orlan

Print, 1920 – Private collection

THE OUTCAST PAINTER, A RECURRENT CHARACTER IN MAC ORLAN'S WORK Mac Orlan's time as a rookie painter in Montmartre left a lasting mark of bitterness and anxiety about poverty that came to the fore again in the latter stages of his life. His written work was also infused with the pictorial, his writing owing much to the visual image".

The figure of the painter became a novelistic character like seamen, prostitutes, and soldiers. This was logical enough for a writer who declared that: "What is important is what enters my way of feeling. My novels start as reportage. Then I distort my hero, I stretch him in a particular direction. In a word, I never tell what I have seen. My stories, even the most fantastical, actually happened".

The painters in Mac Orlan's novels often evoke those he met and sometimes himself too. These painters, secondary characters, are often failures associated with misery, marginality; they scarcely eat enough to avoid going hungry, and their fate is usually unenviable. Some commit suicide. Some hesitate between painting and writing.

In this room, you can hear excerpts from his novels, all written between the two World Wars, as a conclusion to the writer's youth, effectively curtailed by WWI:

- *Le Chant de l'équipage (1918)* Désiré Pointe, an aged painter lodging in an inn in Brittany.
- La Cavalière Elsa (1921) Jean Bogaert, an occasional painter.
- *La Vénus internationale (1923)* Simon Gohelle, artist and brother of Nicolas, a writer.
- Docks in Sous la lumière froide (1926) The narrator becomes a painter.
- Le Quai des brumes (Port of Shadows) (1927) Michel Kraus – inspired by a German painter met in Montmartre, Georg Wiegels, born in Düsseldorf in 1882. Arriving in Paris in 1905, a landscape and watercolour artist, Wiegels committed suicide in 1908, as succinctly reported in the June 13 1908 edition of the daily L'Intransigeant: "A young German painter, Otto Wiegels, aged around twenty-five, a familiar figure among the independent painters and literary circles in Montmartre and Montparnasse, hanged himself yesterday at 6:00 p.m. in particularly distressing conditions."

#### Audio labels :

• Excerpt from Le Chant de l'équipage (1918) – Désiré Pointe, an aged painter lodging in an inn in Brittany. Read by François Nocher Edited by: Olivier Aubry With the kind permission of the commune of Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin and the Pierre Mac Orlan Committee 8 mn 30 • Excerpt from La Cavalière Elsa (1921) - Jean Bogaert, occasional painter. Read by: François Nocher Edited by: Olivier Aubry With the kind permission of the commune of Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin and the Pierre Mac Orlan Committee <u>6 mn 30</u> • Excerpt from La Vénus internationale (1923) - Simon Gohelle, Artist and brother of Nicolas, author. Read by: François Nocher Edited by: Olivier Aubry With the kind permission of the commune of Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin and the Pierre Mac Orlan Committee 4 mn 05 • Excerpt from Docks in Sous la lumière froide (1926) - The narrator becomes a painter Read by: François Nocher **Edited by: Olivier Aubry** With the kind permission of the commune of Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin and the Pierre Mac Orlan Committee 6 mn 55 • Excerpt from Le Quai des brumes (Port of Shadows) (1927) · Michel Kraus – inspired by a German painter met in Montmartre. Read by: François Nocher Edited by: Olivier Aubry 28 mn 10 • Excerpt from the film Le Quai des Brumes (Port of Shadows) (1938) Director: Marcel Carné Screenplay: adapted by Jacques Prévert from the novel by Pierre Mac Orlan Michel Krauss: Robert Le Vigan Panama: Edouard Delmont Quart Vittel: Aimos Jean: Jean Gabin Studio Canal Prix Louis-Delluc 1939 Grand Prix national du cinéma français 1939 Prix Méliès awarded by L'Académie du film (tied with Jean Renoir's La Bête humaine (The Human Beast)) The film earned a special recommendation for Marcel Carné at the 1938 Venice Film Festival 4 mn 30

PAINTERS IN THEIR SETTINGS PRE-1914 MONTMARTRE In 1899, Pierre Dumarchey arrived in Montmartre and met up again with his brother Jean. His ambition was to be a painter, like Toulouse-Lautrec, whom he admired. He painted subjects on sports themes, but was unable to eke out a living from his art. He travelled to and fro between Paris and Rouen to work and returned to Montmartre in 1901. He frequented the cabarets Le Zut and Le Lapin Agile, where he met up with André Salmon and Guillaume Apollinaire. He lived frugally until his national service in 1905. Discharged, he returned to Paris in early 1908, and courted Marguerite Luc, a waitress at the Lapin Agile cabaret. He lived a hand-to-mouth existence in shabby lodgings at the Bateau-Lavoir and also in 1910, at the Bouscarat Hotel, place du Tertre, where other occupants were Jules Depaquit and Gaston Couté.

He wrote songs, erotica, and sought outlets like the magazine Le Rire, directed by Gus Bofa, for his paintings and drawings. Bofa suggested that he write tales.

As from 1910, he became a regular contributor to the weekly magazines Le Rire and Le Sourire, publishing humorous short stories repackaged in a series of compilations --Les Pattes en l'air, Les Contes de la pipe en terre and Les Bourreurs de crânes – between 1911 and 1914. With the adventures of Frip et Bob he was a pioneering comic strip artist. His earnings improved. In 1912, he published his first novel: La Maison du retour écœurant, and married Marguerite Luc in 1913.

In the spring of 1914 he published Le Rire jaune. By now the author had replaced the painter. World War II was nigh.

Mac Orlan appreciated painting that was figurative but disturbing, allowing room for interpretation. He liked painters that he could associate with his fantastique social aesthetic: Toulouse-Lautrec, Pascin and Vlaminck were among them. These painters used colour, while he wrote with a pen in black ink on white paper.

Toulouse-Lautrec was the role model who made him want to paint. He never knew him.

"I saw Toulouse-Lautrec, but never knew him; I never heard the sound of his voice. It was late 1889 or early 1900. One night, leaving Vermorel's with some friends, between place Pigalle and place Blanche, I spotted a group of men, long, dressed in black, dandies leaning on their dress canes. They were clustered around a bearded man who was also sharply dressed." Mac Orlan appreciated the lucid truth that emanated from the work of Toulouse-Lautrec whose subjects moved him and resonated with his books: athletes, prostitutes, cabaret and circus scenes. In 1941, he devoted a book to the artist: "Lautrec, peintre de la lumière froide".

"Toulouse-Lautrec's work is wholly inspired and defended by this elegant dignity – never inclined towards decorative pity – enabling life to be understood frankly. The great artist never shows tenderness towards the girl he brings to life through his depiction, but neither does he judge her nor show contempt for her. All the girls in the brothels painted or drawn by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec are enigmatic because of the lucid truth that is the light in his paintings."

Labels:

Henri de TOULOUSE-LAUTREC (1864 – 1901) James Michaël Print / state proof Printer: Chaix. 1896. Paris Musée national du Sport, Nice – Inv. 66.1.1

Henri de TOULOUSE-LAUTREC (1864 — 1901) La chaîne Simpson (The Simpson Chain) 1896, Chromolithography Musée Carnavalet - - Inv. CARAFF01289

Henri de TOULOUSE-LAUTREC (1864 – 1901) Bruant au Mirliton (Bruant at the Mirliton) 1892, Chromolithography Centre national du graphisme - Chaumont – Inv. A4390

Henri de TOULOUSE-LAUTREC (1864 — 1901) Reine de joie (Queen of Joy) 1892, Chromolithography Centre national du graphisme - Chaumont - Inv. A268

Henri de TOULOUSE-LAUTREC (1864 – 1901) Aristide Bruant dans son cabaret (Aristide Bruant at his cabaret) 1892, Chromolithography Musée de la Seine-et-Marne - Inv. 1987.6.8 Jules Pascin nicknamed Mac Orlan "Le patron" (the boss). They met at the Lapin Agile cabaret in Montmartre and their relationship was straightforward and friendly. They met up in Paris and also at St-Cyr-sur-Morin. Pascin drew and painted Mac Orlan several times. He illustrated Simone de Montmartre, Abécédaire des filles et de l'enfant chéri in 1924, and Aux lumières de Paris in 1925. Mac Orlan devoted two books to him: Tombeau de Pascin in 1944 in which he expressed his grief at his friend's suicide in 1930, and Pascin in 1954.

Mac Orlan considered Pascin as a "secret master of nature". "So hard to grasp in life, he became singularly confident when he painted. Pascin lived in the land where nobody ever lies". He loved his nudes and portraits of women: sensual, ambiguous, pathetic, mysterious. "In each picture that he traced as a memory of divine nights full of fire and barbarous cries, he saved a little soul dressed as a little Parisian girl." "Would that the young girls who go to lay a spray of lilacs on the tomb of Pascin refrain from shedding a tear as they execute the supreme curtsey. Would that the light from their smile settle lightly on the mound flowered by other hands. Would that the eternity of their adolescent grace commingle with the daily adieu of our friendship."

#### Labels:

Julius Mordecai Pincas, known as Jules PASCIN (1885-1930) Hermine David dans un jardin (Hermine David in a Garden) Oil on canvas, 1918 Donated by Hermine David and Lucy Krohg, 1936 Musée national d'Art Moderne – Centre Georges Pompidou Inv. JP 783 P Julius Mordecai Pincas, known as Jules PASCIN (1885-1930) Eliane aux cheveux longs (Eliane with Long Hair) Oil on canvas, 1929 Donated by Hermine David et Lucy Krohg, 1936 Musée national d'Art Moderne – Centre Georges Pompidou Inv. JP 786 P Julius Mordecai Pincas, known as Jules PASCIN (1885-1930) Deux dormeuses (Two Sleeping Girls) Oil on canvas, 1928 Donated by Lucy Krohg and Joseph M. Pincas, on behalf of the Pascin family, 1933 Musée national d'Art Moderne – Centre Georges Pompidou Inv. JP 653 P On loan at the Musée Cantini, Marseille Julius Mordecai Pincas, known as Jules PASCIN (1885-1930) Zimette et Mireille Oil on canvas, 1923 Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Inv. AMVP 1060

Showcase with 6 books and these ALS: 1987.7.4, 2000.8.4, 2004.14.12, 2008.8.519, 2009.7.1, D.PMO.1994/1995.1.201

The lives of Maurice de Vlaminck and Pierre Mac Orlan, whose friendship went back to 1906, mirrored each other. Vlaminck was born in 1876 and Mac Orlan in 1882; both were from the North. Neither studied for long. Vlaminck started painting around 1893, but firstly earned a living as a violinist, sometimes winning cycle races. He took part in the first Paris-Roubaix in 1896. At 17, Mac Orlan left for Paris to embark on a career as a painter. He played rugby till 1913. He played the accordion and the hunting horn.

Vlaminck explains how his love for the bicycle led him to painting; it was there that he experienced his first feelings of freedom and contact with nature: "I owe the first wonders of my life to cycling. My most powerful emotions arose during these days spent on roads and I was tempted to paint them." Both opted to settle away from Paris: Vlaminck chose Rueilla-Gadelière in Eure-et-Loir to the west, while Mac Orlan moved to St-Cyr-sur-Morin in Seine-et-Marne to the east. Both artists loved the reassurance of nature compared with the cities and the modern world that both mistrusted. Their written and painted work draws on experience from different periods in their lives.

Mac Orlan's writings on Vlaminck focus on imagination, what is beneath the surface appearance, rather than image. These landscaped paintings speak of the human condition, of man condemned to live in a world of calamities, suffering and joy, haunted by the end of humanity. Snow, painted by Vlaminck, is "the fear of wolves told at wakes by lanternbearing prophets, those who listen to silence".

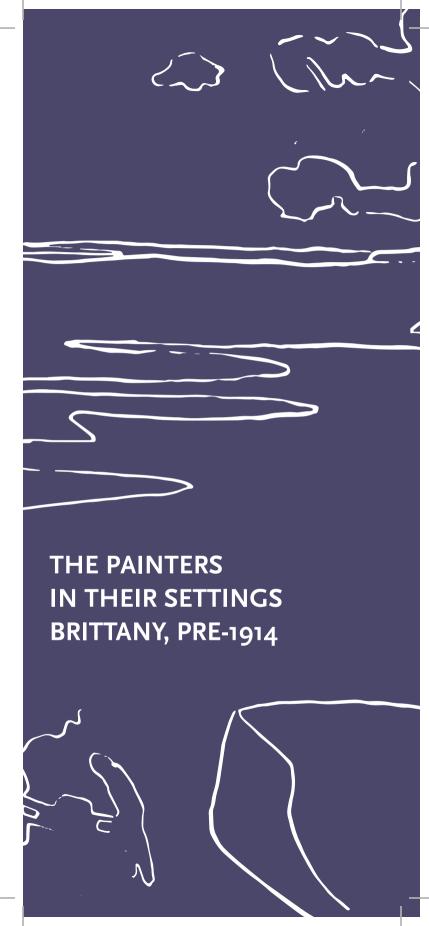
#### Labels:

#### Maurice de VLAMINCK (1876 – 1956)

*Chaumières (Thatched Cottages at the Roadside)* Oil on canvas, 1933 Acquisition by the French state, 1936 – Attribution, 1937 Musée national d'Art Moderne – Centre Georges Pompidou Inv. AM 2330 P

Maurice de VLAMINCK (1876 – 1956) *Les peupliers (Poplars)* Oil on canvas, 1910 Attributed by the Office des Biens et Intérêts Privés in 1950 Musée national d'Art Moderne – Centre Georges Pompidou Inv. R 17 P Maurice de VLAMINCK (1876 – 1956) *Paysage, environs de Chartres (Landscape near Chartres)* Oil on canvas, 1930 Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Inv. AMVP 1176

Audio label: *La rue qui pavoise* Pierre Mac Orlan / Philippe-Gérard Monique Morelli, 1968



It was to be near Pont-Aven, famously a painters' town, that Mac Orlan went to Moëlan-sur-Mer. The novelist returned every year between 1910 and 1914. He was there when he was called up for WWI in August 1914.

He was a regular at a series of restaurants run by "Mère Bacon": the first overlooked the harbour at Brigneau, followed by a hotel and restaurant a few hundred yards away at Malachappe. He lived there surrounded by artists: Jacques Gaston Emile Vaillant, Maurice Asselin and Emile Jourdan. Vaillant and Asselin divided their time between Paris and the coast of the southern Finistère, often going to Brigneau, Pont-Aven, Riec and Concarneau. Jacques Vaillant also stayed at the Choisel mill, in the hamlet of St-Cyr-sur-Morin. He committed suicide in 1934 using his WWI officer's pistol.

Mac Orlan's stays in Brittany inspired him to write the novel Le Chant de l'équipage (1918), in which he evoked the daily life of the small Breton fishing port.

Émile Jourdan's Bohemian lifestyle took him for a while to the Gloanec guest house in Pont-Aven where he befriended Gauguin. He subsequently contracted huge debts and wandered along the coast of southern Finistère to paint. From 1910 to 1914, he stayed at Moëlan-sur-Mer with Mac Orlan who mischievously caricatured him in Le Chant de l'équipage in the character of Désiré Pointe.

#### Labels:

Maurice ASSELIN (1882 - 1947) Nu (Nude) Oil on canvas, Signed BL: ASSELIN – Collection: Philippe Le Stum Maurice ASSELIN (1882 - 1947) Baigneuses en Bretagne (Bathers in Brittany) pastel, undated Workshop stamp BL: M. ASSELIN – Collection: Philippe Le Stum Maurice ASSELIN (1882 - 1947) La jetée à Brigneau (The Pier at Brigneau) Eau-forte, 1918 Collection: Musée départemental Breton, Quimper – Inv. 2003.22.2 Maurice ASSELIN (1882 - 1947) Scène de battage en Bretagne (Threshing Scene in Brittany) Drawing, undated Collection: Musée départemental Breton, Quimper - Inv. 2014.32.1 Maurice ASSELIN (1882 - 1947) Jeunes femmes nues au jardin (Young Women Naked in the Garden) Charcoal, 1900 Collection: Musée départemental Breton, Quimper - Inv. 2017.16.1 Maurice ASSELIN (1882 - 1947) La jetée à Brigneau (The Pier at Brigneau) Oil on canvas, 1918 Gift, Association des Amis de Pont-Aven - Collection: Musée de Pont-Aven – Inv. 2005.18.1

Emile JOURDAN (1861 – 1931) *Après la tempête (After the Storm)* Oil on canvas, 1900-1914 Musée des Beaux-Arts de Quimper - - Inv. 2005.14.1

Emile JOURDAN (1861 – 1931) *Le Port de Brigneau (The Harbour at Brigneau)* Oil on canvas, 1900-1914 Private collection

Jacques Gaston Emile VAILLANT (1879 – 1934) Deux hommes devant la mer (Two Men by the Sea) Charcoal and watercolour drawing on paper, undated Musée des Beaux-Arts de Quimper - Inv. 75.11.1

Jacques Gaston Emile VAILLANT (1879 – 1934) Breton au bol (Breton with a Bowl) Oil on canvas, vers 1913 Gift, Association des Amis du Musée de Pont-Aven Collection: Musée de Pont-Aven, Inv. 2014.15.1

Audio label: *Ça n'a pas d'importance* Pierre Mac Orlan / V. Marceau Germaine Montero, 1957

THE PAINTERS

"I have a great feeling of friendship towards George Grosz. This friendship was born from his work, before I knew the man."

Pierre Mac Orlan and George Grosz met in Paris in 1924. Mac Orlan solicited the French authorities to enable Grosz to extend his stay in France.

"Grosz is a respected artist, one of the young masters of the art of drawing in Europe. When he arrived in Paris, his talent was highly praised in articles. I, for my part, intend to ask him to illustrate a book on Germany. He is an honest man and, though his drawings are satirical, I know nothing in his work that is of an injurious nature for us. His work satirises mainly Germany itself."

Grosz returned to Paris several times. He illustrated Port d'Eauxmortes in 1926.

Mac Orlan defended Grosz's work in France. It echoed his own fantastique social, both by the choice of subjects and the pictorial treatment: the unsettling city, the poverty of the people, the expressionist power of his lines and colours.

In 1932, Mac Orlan visited Berlin, as a special correspondent for the daily Paris-Soir, which devoted a week-long report on Germany during the run-up to the March 1932 elections. Grosz was his guide in Berlin, taking him to Communist party meetings. The result was seven articles, some illustrated by Grosz, describing the atmosphere that reigned in the city. The same year, Grosz went to the USA to teach in New York, before emigrating there in 1933 to escape the rise of Nazism.

#### Labels:

George GROSZ (1893 – 1959) *Squelette au bandeau et au fût d'obus* Drawing: ink on paper, 1922-25 Historial de la Grande Guerre, Péronne – Inv. 8 FI 58

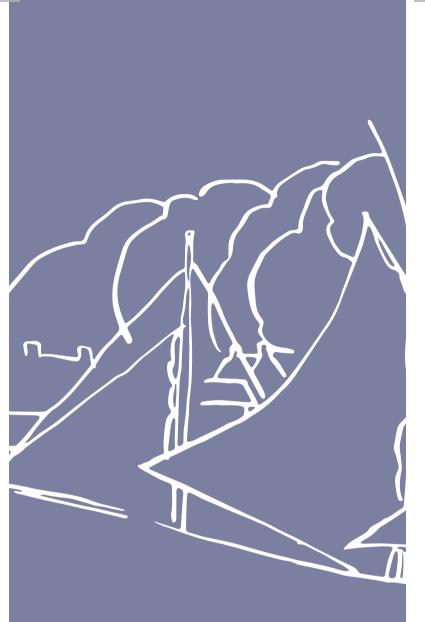
George GROSZ (1893 – 1959) Ainsi va toute chair II – Weg allen Fleisches II (The Way of All Flesh II) Oil on canvas, 1931 Donated by Madame Théa Sternheim, 1934 Musée national d'Art Moderne – Centre Georges Pompidou Inv. JP 700P On Ioan at Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nancy Coorge CROSZ (1803 – 1050)

George GROSZ (1893 – 1959) *Scène de rue (Street Scene)* Watercolour, 1924 Musée de la Seine-et-Marne On loan from the Commune de Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin Inv. D.PMO.1994/1995.1.6699

Audio label: *Rhenish song* Pierre Mac Orlan / V. Marceau Monique Morelli, 1989







Mac Orlan visited Brest several times. He befriended a group of artists including the painter and ceramist Jim Sévellec, the historian and novelist Claude Farrère, the writer Victor Segalen, and the poet Saint-Pol-Roux.

Sévellec appreciated the way Mac Orlan portrayed the Brest of the 18th century in L'Ancre de Miséricorde. Sévellec made scale models of Brest at different times exhibited at Tour Tanguy and included a small shop "L'Ancre de miséricorde", as though it had really existed.

Pierre Péron, a native of Brest, painted naval vessels. He was very taken with safeguarding the city's heritage, was very taken with the way Mac Orlan depicted the major sea port in his adventure novels.

"I met Pierre Mac Orlan for the first time in 1946. He lived surrounded by his souvenirs in the poetic house-museum at Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin. Short, stocky, sharp-witted and with a penetrating gaze, he welcomed me warmly. It was enough for me to pronounce the word "BREST", and the sympathy between us soon developed into friendship."

Mac Orlan wrote Brest vu par Pierre Péron, based on his memories and using the painter's watercolours for subject matter. Appointed curator of the Musée de la Marine in 1972, Pierre Péron attached special importance to safeguarding historical images of Brest, and associated the writer's work with this project.

#### Labels:

Pierre PERON (1905 - 1988) Brest, la Penfeld, le pont, l'arsenal (Brest, The Penfeld, The Bridge, The Arsenal) <u>Oil on canvas, undated (later than 1954, year in which the</u> bridge was built) -Collection: Philippe Le Stum Pierre PERON (1905 - 1988) Brest First edition - Pierre Mac Orlan and Pierre Péron Ex. Looseleaf, NC proof – 1947 – Collection: Yves-Marie Péron Pierre PERON (1905 - 1988) Pierre Mac Orlan Drawing, Graphite, 1950 – Collection: Yves-Marie Péron Pierre PERON (1905 - 1988) Brest First edition – Pierre Mac Orlan and Pierre Péron 1947 Musée de la Seine-et-Marne – Inv. 2011.1.2 Jim SEVELLEC (1897 – 1971) Table with earthenware top around 1950 – Collection: Musée départemental Breton, Quimper - Inv. 1990.14.2 Jim SEVELLEC (1897 – 1971) Workshop plate for the vase decorated with Bigouden (Bretons)

Henriot pottery works, 1930 Collection: Musée départemental Breton, Quimper - Inv. 1991.10.1 lim SEVELLEC (1897 - 1971) Vase decorated with Bigouden (Bretons) Henriot pottery works, 1930 Collection: Musee départemental Breton, Quimper - Inv. 1993.57.1 Jim SEVELLEC (1897 – 1971) Danseurs de Plougastel-Daoulas (Dancers at Plougastel-Daoulas) Henriot pottery works Collection: Musée départemental Breton, Quimper Inv. 2011.22.24 Jim SEVELLEC (1897 – 1971) Jug decorated with Breton women and children Henriot pottery works, 1930 Collection: Musée départemental Breton, Quimper -Inv.2011.22.111 Jim SEVELLEC (1897 - 1971) Plate decorated with three fishermen Henriot pottery works Collection: Musée départemental Breton, Quimper Inv. 2011.22.184 Jim SEVELLEC (1897 - 1971) Dish decorated with two drinkers Henriot pottery works Collection: Musée départemental Breton, Quimper - Inv. 2011.22.85 Jim SEVELLEC (1897 – 1971) Dish decorated with two Plougastelenn and little girls Henriot pottery works, 1930 Collection: Musée départemental Breton, Quimper Inv. 2011.22.173 <u> Jim SEVELLEC (1897 – 1971)</u> Figurine with two little girls Henriot pottery works, 1940 Collection: Musée départemental Breton, Quimper -Inv.2011.22.200 Jim SEVELLEC (1897 – 1971) Ceramic panel from the Henriot pottery works Henriot pottery works, 1950 Collection: Musée départemental Breton, Quimper - Inv. 2011.30.2

Audio label: Fanny de Lanninon Pierre Mac Orlan / V. Marceau Germaine Montero, 1957

THE PAINTERS

In 1926, Pierre Mac Orlan made the house acquired by his mother-in-law into his main home. He would live there till his death in 1970, while keeping pieds-à-terre in Paris and travelling widely until the late 1930s. He befriended local painters who often paid him visits. Among these was his neighbour from Ferté-sous-Jouarre, André Planson, whom he had known since 1924.

Of Planson, Mac Orlan regularly evoked the painter's instinct and painting as a mysterious, inexplicable art, like that of writing. He viewed Planson as a man who was at once robust and mischievous, a true native of Brie, an affectionate creator gifted with a hand that could see nature and capture its colours, light and shadows.

Henri Landier met Mac Orlan in 1957. The former was 22, the latter 75. They hit it off immediately and enjoyed a deep friendship. They had plenty in common: Paris and Montmartre, the navy and travel, the Brie landscapes. Their friendship was celebrated in an illustrated book published in 1967: Les Chansons de la Vieille Lanterne, astonishingly dark in tone, given that the artist would gradually adopt a far brighter palette. Henri Landier has never forgotten Mac Orlan. In 2018 he painted a whole series of canvases inspired by the author's memories of the war and that will be on show this autumn at the Musée de la Grande Guerre du pays de Meaux.

#### Labels:

André PLANSON (1898 – 1981) La maison de Pierre Mac Orlan aux Archets Pierre Mac Orlan's House at Les Archets) Oil on canvas, 1970 **Collection: Marie-Dominique Sabouraud Planson** André PLANSON (1898 – 1981) Eglise de Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin (The Church, Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin) Watercolour **Collection: Marie-Dominique Sabouraud Planson** André PLANSON (1898 – 1981) Eglise de Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin (The Church, Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin) Watercolour Collection: Marie-Dominique Sabouraud Planson André PLANSON (1898 – 1981) Les inondations vers Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin (Flooding near Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin) Oil on canvas

**Collection: Marie-Dominique Sabouraud Planson** 

André PLANSON (1898 – 1981) *La Marne à La Ferté-sous-Jouarre en hiver (The Marne at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre in winter)* Oil on canvas – Collection: Marie-Dominique Sabouraud Planson

### Audio label:

*Les compagnons du tour de France* Pierre Mac Orlan / Lino Leonardi Monique Morelli, 1968 THE PAINTERS N THEIR SETTINGS COURBET, HIS LANDSCAPES AND 1950S ART BOOKS In the 1950s, new styles of publication emerged based on colour reproductions and featuring a dialogue between text and image. There was much discussion about what Malraux called the "imaginary museum". The publisher Skira, aided and abetted by authors who were often – but not always – specialists, established the concept of the "coffee table" art books that very much embodied authors' viewpoints. Mac Orlan always rejected any pretence that he was commenting painting: "an art that can be felt but not explained". He was not an art critic in the traditional sense.

At this time, cheaper collections became very popular. They addressed the taste of an audience in search of status symbols, buying coffee table books to show them off in their bookcases. Mac Orlan was part of the trend.

An illustration of this is the book he devoted to Gustave Courbet in the collection Les Demi-dieux published by éditions du Dimanche between 1943 and 1955, a collection run by François Llano-Florez and Anna Marsan. Each book associated a writer's texts with reproductions of an artist's works: Cocteau and Le Greco, Gide and Poussin, Léon Paul Fargue and Vélasquez, Jean Cassou and Delacroix, Maurois and David, Alain and Ingres, Maurice Arland and De La Tour, Vaudoyer and Manet.

Labels:

Gustave COURBET (1819 – 1877) Paysage Suisse (Swiss landscape) Oil on cardboard, sans date Private collection – On loan at Musée des Beaux-Arts de Quimper - Inv.2005.14.1

Gustave COURBET (1819 – 1877) Solitude ou le ruisseau couvert (Solitude (The Covered Stream)) Oil on cardboard, 1866 Slingeneyer / Stec bequest to Musée Fabre – Montpellier -Inv. 828.1.28

# CONCLUSION

Pierre Mac Orlan, Mémorial du petit jour (1955):

"Was I right to write? Probably, because I earned myself a living. Sometimes, however, bitter regrets stick in my throat and in my mind; regret that I did not work enough, did not take the chance by persevering after my first experience, perhaps the right one, and going all the way. Had I done so, like others, I could have left memoirs in colours, colours that a man of my age can no longer imagine."

The regrets of a writer who would have wanted to be a painter. The regrets of an author reduced to using a pen in lieu of a palette. The regrets of an old man looking back at his youth...

### DÉPARTEMENT DE SEINE-ET-MARNE MUSÉE DÉPARTEMENTAL DE LA SEINE-ET-MARNE

17, avenue de la Ferté-sous-Jouarre 77750 Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin <u>Tél. : 01602</u>44600 - mdsm@departement77.fr musee-seine-et-marne.fr

#### **OPENING TIME**

Open every day except Saturday from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. (6 p.m. in July - August) and Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Closed on May 1st and from December 24th to January 1st.

#### **ENTRANCE FEES**

Full price: 5 euros Reduced price : 3 euros (+ 65 years old, from 18 to 25 years, groups from 10 people) Free: - 18 years old, Social minima, unemployed, students up to 25 years, people with disabilities and victims of war and their companion

**VISIT OFFER** Guided tours and adapted activities on reservation

#### **COMFORT OF VISIT**

Reception and garden. Reserved parking. Adapted visits by reservation. Reception, audio-conference system for guided tours and audiovisual point. Visits, activities (visit by reservation for groups). Visits, activities and adapted arrangements (visit by reservation for groups).

#### ACCESS

• By public transport: from Paris Gare de l'Est, train to from La Ferté-sous-Jouarre. Bus line 34 to go from the station to the museum (time information: 01 60 24 46 00). GPS coordinates: Latitude: 48.90803 - Longitude: 3.18169

Practical information on the museum's website and / or Facebook. Due to the health crisis, the hours and conditions of access have been changed. Find out before you go !







