

PRESS NOTE

Leandro Navarro Gallery presents from November 6 to January 4, 2019 an exhibition of artists Kurt Schwitters and Jean (Hans) Arp.

This is the second time this gallery presents the work by Kurt Schwitters having done the first one in spring 2008.

A catalog has been prepared that presented by Kosme de Barañano, Professor at the School of Arts in Altea (Alicante) can be seen on our web page <http://www.leandro-navarro.com> and that under the title "Curves and straight lines traced with lyricism" explains the beauty of the pieces that the gallery has managed to gather from both artists.

There were many aspects that helped making the artistic and vital connection between both artists happened.

United by the friendship that they professed for many years and by their belonging to the group of Dadaist artists, among other artistic movements, both were multidisciplinary artists with an important international projection. The difficult times in which they had to live, both had to change residence and moving to different countries on more than one occasion, and both recognize the other his contribution and influence in the different ways in which his art was expressed.

Jean (Hans) Arp was born the 16 September 1887 in Strasbourg. He was the eldest son of tobacco maker Jürgen Wilhem Arp and his wife Marie-Josphine. He grew up in a French-German bilingual environment and since he was really young he became interested in art and literature, both German and French.

At the beginning of the 20th century he exhibited with the group Der Blaue Reiter and created his first abstract collages. In 1916-17 he founded the Dada movement together with other artists at the Cabaret Voltaire in Zürich. During almost all his life his art is divided between painting, sculpture and poetry as well many essays.

In 1918 he met Kurt Schwitters who encouraged him to continue investigating with the collage technique. Also his marriage with the artist Sophie Tauber with whom he works together very often will be an incentive in his artistic research. In 1926 he made his first sculptures and joined the surrealist movement which he later left to create the Abstraction-Creation group.

The outbreak of World War II made him flee to Switzerland where his wife Sophie Tauber-Arp died in 1943. He returned to Paris after the war ended and must change his name in German - Hans- to the French: Jean.

He intensifies his work in the United States and will receive numerous and important commissions from private and public institutions. He has started a relationship with Marguerite Hagenbach with whom he will live until the end of his days.

His writings, poems, essays are innumerable..... he also had an international prestige as a writer as well.

Kurt Schwitters was born on June 20, 1887 in Hanover, son of merchants Eduard and Henriette Schwitters. After finishing high school he began his artistic studies at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Hannover. In 1911 he participated in an exhibition for the first time presenting four still lifes and a portrait of his mother. From the very beginning his first paintings shows a clear impressionist influence and soon begins to participate in painting contests like the one in Hannover; he will participate in this particular one until 1934.

He presents his first solo show at the Sturm Gallery in Berlin in 1918 and will work for this gallery for many years long. At this time he met Jean Arp among other artists and made his first collages from small fragments of wood, tram tickets and other used materials, giving them shape and adding colour, letters and words. He named these creations as *Merz*. Also in this period he will make a series of Dadaist watercolours.

Soon after, he joined IVEFK (an international association of Expressionist, Cubist and Futurist art).

1922-1925 To spread the Dadaist spirit he created and published a magazine which he will titled *Merz*. Together with Arp and Tzara among other artist they sign the "Manifesto of Dadaism" in The Hague and with Arp publishes the article named "Der Würfel".

As an equally multidisciplinary artist he continues to work on a novel and premieres a series of poems with syllables that are repeated monotonously and will be named as *Ursonate*.

After leaving the Dadaist movement and together with other artists, they create the Hanover Abstract Group, which in opposition to the Dadaist movement will have an apolitical, fantastic and constructivist spirit.

In the decade of the 30 he continues working as a typographer to get extra money and after a first trip to the Scandinavian countries he will spend some summers painting landscapes in them. Defamed and his work marginalized by National Socialism he settled in Norway for a short time.

In 1936 he travels to Switzerland to see Arp as they are working together on a project organized by A.H.Barr at the MoMA in New York. This will be the last time they met.

A bit later after this meeting with ARP he decides to go to Norway and settled near Oslo until the German invasion forced him to leave again. He moved then to England where he lives until the end of his days.

He died in January 1948.