



**Pierre Alechinsky: "Lucioles" (Fireflies).
Signed Alechinsky 1984.**

This year marks 75 years since a small group of like-minded artists met in a café and formulated the ideas that would form the foundation of CoBrA. The movement – like the firefly – had a relatively short lifespan, but its artistic creations still resonate to this day, and the hope of being able to create a community through art – to rebuild and bring people together in the aftermath of a devastating war – has never been more relevant.

For our Anniversary Auction, we are delighted to be able to present "Lucioles", an impressive work by Pierre Alechinsky from 1984. Alechinsky's mode of expression is associated with Tachisme, Abstract Expressionism and Lyrical Abstraction, but, from the beginning, it was mainly illustration techniques, printing and photography that interested him. He became acquainted with the other CoBra artists in 1949, and as the youngest member of the group, he is also the only one still alive.

From the late 1960s onwards, Alechinsky developed his own, unique style, which can be seen as a distinctive and original fusion of Abstract Expressionism and oriental calligraphy. His paintings are usually painted in transparent acrylics on thin paper pasted on paper, and he has managed to emulate this style in his graphic production, where his aquatints in particular possess great power and beauty.

It is often in the margin of his works that the key to the image is found. Either in the form of small, often black-and-white illustrations that are repeated in the motif itself, or, as here, through a swarm of colours and figures buzzing around the simple, graphic centre. During the day, the fireflies are hidden under the bushes, branches and leaves of the forest floor, emerging at night to light their lanterns. Dissolved into yellow splashes of colour, they flit around the edge, drawing in the viewer's gaze. Soon other creatures appear; with shining eyes, they glance out fleetingly, only to go back into hiding somewhere behind the swift stroke of the brush, a second later.

"Beyond the frame there is... well, all the rest! The roving hordes, the outside world, so powerful when you compare it to a small rectangle of paper or canvas."

(Pierre Alechinsky from "Pierre Alechinsky: "Margin and Center", Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, p. 15).

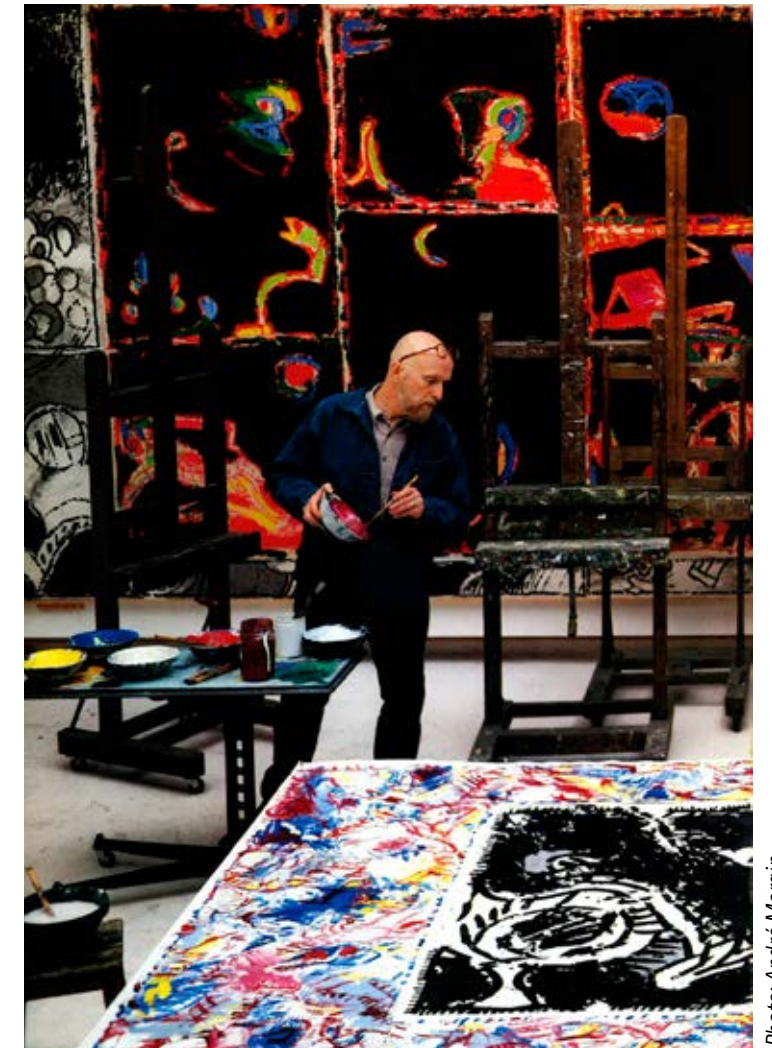


Photo: André Morain

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PIERRE ALECHINSKY

b. Bruxelles 1927

"Lucioles" (Fireflies). Signed Alechinsky 1984; signed, titled and dated on the stretcher. Indian ink with acrylic margin on paper laid down on canvas. 185 x 284 cm.

Literature: Max Loreau: "Alechinsky. Repères, cahiers d'art contemporain no. 17", Galerie Maeght Lelong, Paris 1984, ill. p. 9.; in detail on the front- and back cover and on p. 31 where Alechinsky is working on the work in his studio.

Exhibited: "Pierre Alechinsky: Margin and Center", Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Des Moines Art Center, Iowa; Kunstverein Hannover; Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Bruxelles, 1987-88, ill. in the catalogue, no. 74, p. 114.

Provenance: Galerie Birch, Copenhagen.

Provenance: Private collection, Denmark. Acquired from the above by the present owner. DKK 3,000,000–3,500,000 / € 400,000–470,000