



COLLÈGE  
DE FRANCE  
1530

## THE MAKING OF PAINTING

International Symposium

October 30 and 31, 2014

Metaphysics and Philosophy of Knowledge - Pr Claudine Tiercelin

Jeff Koons (USA), Anne Neukamp (Allemagne), Marc Molk (France), Damien Cadio (France), Jules de Balincourt (USA), Eva Nielsen (France), Jake & Dinos Chapman (UK), Hernan Bas (USA), Chéri Samba (Congo), Thomas Lévy-Lasne (France), Ida Tursic & Wilfried Mille (France), Gregory Forstner (USA), Glenn Brown (UK), Amélie Bertrand (France)

### 16 painters present a live testimony of their own practice of painting

**Professor Claudine Tiercelin, Chair of Metaphysics and philosophy of knowledge, accompanied by artists Thomas Lévy-Lasne and Marc Molk, scientific directors of the conference, invite, at the College de France, 16 painters - internationally recognized, mid-career or younger artists – who will present a live testimony of their own practice**

Beyond celebrating the extreme liveliness of painting in France as well as internationally, these two days take place in the context of the work of Claudine Tiercelin on the very nature of *knowledge* and, more particularly this year, on the concept of *practical* knowledge. "It is not a matter of having an ideological discourse about art, nor of analyzing *completed* paintings, as is often the case in other disciplines, but of questioning, without any mythology on creation, the *process* itself and, more importantly, the kind of *practical knowledge* that it involves", says Claudine Tiercelin. "One may be surprised that metaphysics and philosophy of knowledge should take art and its practices as an object of study". But these two days will show how "appropriate" it is to "take for exploration the field of *artistic* practice and, more precisely, of the practice of *painting*, because the very process involved in the making of a painting is rich enough to allow a thorough analysis of the type of practical knowledge involved therein. "

#### What are the kinds of knowledge involved in the practice of painting ?

Sixteen artists will present, to the public of the College of France, a live, personal testimony of the various processes they go through in their work and, more importantly, of the type of *practical* knowledge that is involved in the act of painting. "We shall just listen to what the primarily concerned, namely the painters themselves, have to say about their own practice", says Professor Tiercelin. "Besides the obvious intellectual goals, the aim is to present, inside the walls of the College de France, the most advanced state of reflection on their own practice by contemporary artists coming from all countries, to provide access to the well-kept workshop or factory secrets, to understand better what is happening, for real, in this fantastic but also very controlled and regulated adventure that is the making of a painting."

The various painters were chosen in such a way as to represent the best possible diversity in terms of aesthetics, careers and nationalities, but first and foremost, of practices.

Access to the conference is free, subject to the availability of seats (450 seats – Amphitheatre Marguerite de Navarre). Interventions in English will benefit from a simultaneous translation. The set of interventions will be available in audio and video on our website: [www.college-de-france.fr](http://www.college-de-france.fr)

(Details on the content of the talks are available on this site: [http://www.college-de-france.fr/site/en-claudine-tiercelin/p3727306232142939\\_content.htm](http://www.college-de-france.fr/site/en-claudine-tiercelin/p3727306232142939_content.htm)).



COLLÈGE  
DE FRANCE  
— 1530 —

## CHAIRE DE MÉTAPHYSIQUE ET PHILOSOPHIE DE LA CONNAISSANCE

Année académique 2014-2015

Pr Claudine TIERCELIN

# La Fabrique de la peinture *The Making of Painting*

Colloque international • International Symposium

Jeudi 30 et vendredi 31 octobre 2014,  
amphithéâtre Marguerite de Navarre.

### Jeudi 30 octobre 2014

- 09h00** Ouverture du colloque  
Claudine Tiercelin
- 09h10** Connecting to the Universal  
Jeff Koons
- 10h10** L'image efficace  
Anne Neukamp
- 11h10** La raison sentimentale  
Marc Molk
- 12h10** Déjeuner
- 14h00** L'image fantôme : atlas, sujet, résistances  
Damien Cadio
- 15h00** Touriste accidentel  
Jules de Balincourt
- 16h00** Surimpression  
Eva Nielsen
- 17h00** Pause
- 17h30** How to Make a Painting  
Jake & Dinos Chapman

### Vendredi 31 octobre 2014

- 09h00** Bright Shadows: Between Pop and Occultism  
Hernan Bas
- 10h00** L'enfant qui ne fait pas mieux que son père  
a échoué  
Chéri Samba
- 11h00** Le grand jeu : peinture de la réalité,  
réalité de la peinture  
Thomas Lévy-Lasne
- 12h00** Déjeuner
- 14h00** Contamination  
Ida Tursic & Wilfried Mille
- 15h00** De la haute mer au midi brûlant  
Gregory Forstner
- 16h00** Pause
- 16h30** Influences and Transformation  
Glenn Brown
- 17h30** Fusionner les calques invisibles de la peinture  
à l'huile  
Amélie Bertrand

*Ce colloque bénéficie du généreux soutien de la Fondation Hugot  
du Collège de France. La modération des interventions sera assurée par  
le Professeur Claudine Tiercelin avec l'assistance de Thomas Lévy-Lasne  
et de Marc Molk, directeurs scientifiques du colloque*

**Amphithéâtre Marguerite de Navarre**  
11, place Marcelin-Berthelot, 75005  
Paris  
[www.college-de-france.fr](http://www.college-de-france.fr)

Serge Haroche  
Administrateur du Collège de France



### Questions to Claudine Tiercelin

**- You hold the Chair of Metaphysics and Philosophy of Knowledge; how, in such a context, did you become interested in the practice of painting? Why such an object of study and what kind of observations did you start from?**

**Claudine Tiercelin** : This conference takes place in the much broader context of the reflections I am going to have this year on the concept of « practical » knowledge, in line of the analyses I have been conducting for several years on the very nature of knowledge (2011), or of what enables one, for example, to apply that term even to metaphysics (2012). There are vivid discussions today about the question whether such forms of knowledge that might be more easily characterized as “practical”, in so far as they involve “abilities” (or “know-how”), capacities, talents, skills, endowments (knowing *how* to ride a bicycle, to play the piano, to master a language) should be opposed or are, on the contrary, reducible to forms of knowledge one might more naturally view as “theoretical”, in the sense that they rely more on beliefs, judgments that are more likely to be expressed in a “propositional” way (I know *that*  $2 + 2 = 4$ , *that* water is H<sub>2</sub>O, *that* the weather is fine today). The question is anything but simple, in particular, when one views, as I do, any kind of knowledge as an inquiry aiming indeed at truth and justified beliefs, but such beliefs, in their turn, less as internal mental states than as dispositions to act, requiring, moreover, on the part of the person who is searching for knowledge, some epistemic qualities or *virtues* (coherence, attention to evidence, fallibility, vagueness, etc.), or even some *aims*, and, in particular, the discovery, as much as possible, of some *real* properties of the world: physical properties, indeed, but also mental ones, and why not, aesthetic properties?

Even if the lecture courses and seminars will have a broader spectrum, I thought it appropriate, in accordance with my view of philosophical work as implying an *a posteriori* dimension, hence as having to take account of what goes on in the empirical sciences, to take for exploration the field of *artistic practice*, and more precisely, of the practice of *painting*, because the very process involved in the making of a painting is rich enough to allow a thorough analysis of the type of practical knowledge involved therein.

I started with two observations (or rather, frustrations): indeed, from the philosophical side, art theorists are plenty, and aesthetics is an abounding field : however, many analyses are still made from a « view from nowhere » position, without any confrontation of the arguments, theses and theories with the very *practices* of the artists ; similarly, from the side of art historians, critics, or literature, the sum of information and analyses is undeniable, but the “theorizing” part is also at times hermetic, and the analyses refer more to the completed *products* (namely, the paintings) than to the *process* itself. Hence the following project: to proceed with the minimum of *a priori* views, without mobilizing any hackneyed mythology of creation or that would be confined to the affects of the painter in prejudging, for example, that such affects were the explanatory key of everything, and just listen to what the primarily concerned, namely the artists themselves might have to say about their practice of painting. Moreover, to speak of “the practice of painting” in the singular, would have meant immediately committing oneself to the sin of “the view from nowhere”, since such practices

are so much varied. This is why I wanted to take advice from two young artists, Marc Molk and Thomas Lévy-Lasne, whose artwork I appreciate, as well as the subtle and informed way they talk about their art. I asked them to assist me, as scientific directors of the conference, and to make me suggestions, while avoiding any ideological bias, as to the richest possible range of participants, the only concern being to best represent the diversity of practices, aesthetics, but also to consider careers and nationalities. This was very long because there are so many talents and it is always a tough choice. Every choice always means that many other interesting possibilities have been rejected... We are aware of that, but we hope that, all in all, we have managed to come to a rather well-balanced selection.

**- Why did you choose painting, in particular ?**

**Claudine Tiercelin :** Indeed, I could have chosen another artistic practice, music, for instance, or, among the visual arts, insisted more on installations or performances, which, as one knows, are very important today. However, like it or not, painting has always been and is still today, the production of a concrete object, the painting, which is here, *hic et nunc*, in its materiality, with its actual properties— however fuzzy, its edges, intentionally or not, may be – an object which cannot be exhausted, because of that face to face (physical, mental, or even aesthetic and artistic) shock it produces, neither by the “commentaries”, nor by the “discourses”, nor by the various “contextualizations”, nor even by aesthetic “experience” itself. Painting is also what is directly in tune with the very *process* of its *making*, as well as with *the one* that produces it, as Etienne Gilson emphasized in *Painting and Reality*. No doubt, what stands in each of the terms of this infinitely complex relationship has changed considerably (the nature of the object, the materials, gestures, techniques used in the making, the role of the subject (s) (or of *no* subject, if one only uses assistants), even at relatively recent past; and it is precisely such developments we wish to account for, in the first place, by listening to what painters of today, in all their rich diversity, have themselves to say. So, far be it from us to advocate a nostalgic return to Great *sub specie aeternitatis* Painting. This does not exclude, however, and regardless of the extent of - after all natural - evolutions, that beyond the wide variety of practices, we might identify some invariants and, specifically, in the type of *knowledge* involved, for example, in how each one responds to such questions as: What is a technique? How is the singularity of a practice achieved? What is the role of intentions? What part should be granted to the painter’s formation, to the influences, to general knowledge, and also, to the context, conventions, traditions and history? What about the instruments, the various materials that are being used, what about the various gestures, however new they are, at least for some of them? And what matters most?

**- What is the objective of this conference and what do you expect from it ?**

**Claudine Tiercelin:** The practice of painting is, as I said, an infinitely complex multiple terms relationship. It will not escape you that the questions the exploration of these different terms would like to raise should be of interest, in the first place, and very selfishly, to the metaphysician coupled with the philosopher of knowledge that I am. In particular, I expect from such a live inquiry into the practice of painting to come to a better grasp of the links between the practical and theoretical (conceptual and symbolic, of course, but also iconic and indexical) features of practical knowledge, in short, to test the hypothesis that, even if knowing “ that...” is almost always, in fact, regardless of the level of abstraction, knowing “how...”, the formula may also apply under certain conditions, the other way round. Incidentally, I hope to have my ideas made clearer about the type of epistemic qualities or *virtues*, and why not, in some cases, about the (aesthetic, metaphysical) *aims*, that such a practice, at least for some, commits them to.

But the goal far exceeds the Chair of metaphysics and philosophy of knowledge. Besides the obvious intellectual aims, these days of research also have a more general ambition. The aim is to present, inside the walls of the Collège de France, the most advanced state of reflection on their own practice by contemporary painters coming from all countries, some of them being internationally recognized, others less, because they tend to be younger, but whose talent is already confirmed.

The purpose of the Collège de France has always been to teach "knowledge in the making". In the arts, we keep showing it too, as the annual Chairs of artistic creation bear witness of, that allowed to host the most well-known contemporary artists. I subscribe, naturally, to such a perspective. Contemporary art often has a reputation for being hermetic and for working on connivance. Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of the artists who will all speak in their own name (an always risky performance, be it at the beginning, at the middle or at the top of a career, as it is easier to let others talk about you!), the public of the Collège de France will be able to benefit from a number of keys: keys, first, to provide access to the well-kept workshop or factory secrets, keys, then, to better realize the extreme liveliness of painting today, from various countries, but in France too, which is sometimes masked; keys, at last, to understand better what is happening, for real, in this fantastic but also very controlled and regulated adventure that is the making of a painting.

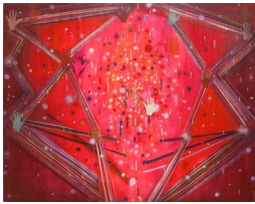
**- More generally, what is, according to you, mostly characteristic, in terms of the relationship to art, and to painting in particular ?**

**Claudine Tiercelin** : I am certainly not the best person to answer this question, in the sense that I am not familiar with what is called the "world" of art, let alone the struggles that are played in the "marketplace" of art. So I leave it to others (artists, historians, critiques, gallery owners, museum curators, directors of art schools, sociologists of art) with the task of answering these highly complex questions, which I obviously do not deny the importance and reality of, even if they have sometimes also an ideological and polemical dimension that, in the symposium, we specifically sought to avoid. But I would lie if I were to say that I am not concerned about the fragility of the situation today in the world of art in France (closing galleries, procedures for awarding grants, and some theoretical and institutional choices, etc.) and, primarily, by the precariousness of artists, just as I am preoccupied, in general, by the situation of all researchers, while we observe that the disciplines themselves experience, in many areas, an extraordinary vitality. For someone who, like myself, came to be somewhat interested in the visual arts field, it is now glaring. This is one of the reasons why I wanted to give expression also in this symposium to lesser known talents, whose value is not necessarily to judge in terms of what they are worth, on the art market.



## Biographies

### - Jules de Balincourt / USA



Jules de Balincourt was born in Paris in 1972, he lives and works in Brooklyn. Franco-American, he is represented by several galleries among the largest in the United States and the world: Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Paris; Victoria Miro, London; and Salon 94 in New York. His work will be the subject of a retrospective at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas in the fall of 2014. Jules de Balincourt paints on wooden panels, on instinct, complex and colorful scenes that are built as and when the painting gets elaborated.

"Ecstatic Contact", Oil, acrylic and spray paint on panel, 96x120in, 2012

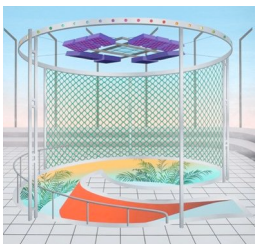
### - Hernan Bas / USA



Hernan Bas was born in 1978 in Miami. He lives and works between Miami and Detroit. Already spotted on the international art market, he has been the subject of two major solo exhibitions: *The Other Side* at the Kunstverein Hannover in 2012 and a retrospective at the Rubell Family Collection, Miami in 2007 (shown then at the Brooklyn Museum of Art in 2009). His paintings represent melancholy young men in vast chaotic landscapes. His mixed media concentrate a variety of painterly gestures: printing and friction effects, expressionist movements, etc.

"The landmark (or the laser point)", Acrylic and airbrush on linen over panel, 4x5 feet, 2009 Courtesy Galerie Perrotin

### - Amélie Bertrand / France



Amélie Bertrand was born in 1985 in Cannes la Bocca. She lives and works in Paris where she is represented by the Semiose gallery. Her work has been exhibited in France and Germany and is part of the collections of the National Fund for Contemporary Art and the Regional Fund for Contemporary Art Limousin. Her highly structured, colourful paintings, unfold a world that is both geometric and dreamlike, designed first on Photoshop, where false flat areas and architectural structures coexist, with a great attention to volume.

"Sidewalk Surfboard", Oil on canvas, 180x190 cm, 2010 Courtesy Semiose galerie Paris, Private collection

### - Glenn Brown / UK



Glenn Brown was born in England in 1966, he lives and works in London. He pursues an international career and his paintings are part of the largest collections. His work has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions, including Serpentine Gallery, London (2004), Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (2008), Tate Liverpool, UK; as well as very numerous group exhibitions as *Dear Painter*, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2002). Glenn Brown does not hesitate to copy and modify famous paintings in his own acidulated and disturbing way. The very specific movement of his brushstrokes creates fine lines of swirling color.

"The Happiness in One's Pocket", Oil on panel, 225x180 cm, 20

### - Damien Cadio / France



Damien Cadio was born in France in 1975; he lives and works in Berlin. Represented by several galleries in France and abroad, his work has been shown in numerous solo exhibitions (CRAC Alsace, Microwave Velizy Villacoublay, Cap Saint-Fons, Grimm Rosenfeld in New York, Galerie Eva Hober and Almine Rech in Paris, Manzoni Schäper in Berlin). A great collector of images from the Internet or from his own shots, he then paints them by changing the framing and colorful atmosphere so as to integrate them into his world. His brushstrokes are delicate and refined.

« Janvier », Oil on canvas, 24x30cm, 2012

### - Jake & Dinos Chapman / UK



Jake Chapman was born in 1966 in Cheltenham and Dinos Chapman in 1962 in London. They live and work in London. The two brothers paint and sculpt together. Their work is represented in many museums and they have international recognition. Among their recent solo exhibitions: Chicken, Pinchuk Art Center, Kiev (2013); The Hermitage, St.Petersburg (2012); Museo Pino Pascali, Polignano a Mare, Italy (2010); Hastings Museum, UK (2009); Kestner Gesellschaft Hannover (2008); Tate Britain, London (2007); Tate Liverpool (2006); Kunsthaus Bregenz (2005); Museum Kunst Palast Düsseldorf (2003); Modern Art Oxford (2003); and PS1 Contemporary Art Center, New York (2000). Their practice is based on the principle of copying and modifying, as in their series of "Victorian portrait paintings" where, on canvases from the 19th century, they "repaint" some of the faces.

"One Day You Will No Longer Be Loved I", Oil on canvas, 11 15/16x10 1/8 in. 2008 © Jake and Dinos Chapman Photo: Stephen White Courtesy White Cube

### - Gregory Forstner / USA



Gregory Forstner was born in 1975 in Douala (Cameroon). He lives and works in Brooklyn. He is represented by several galleries, Germany, France and Italy and is represented in collections including the Museum of Modern Art of the city of Paris (ARC), The Museum of Grenoble, the Modern and Contemporary Art in Nice (MAMAC), FNAC (Fond National d'Art Contemporain) Museum.

« L'Hôtesse de l'air-19 », Oil on canvas, 162x130cm, 2008, Private collection

### - Jeff Koons / USA



Jeff Koons was born in Pennsylvania in 1955. He lives and works in New York. A world-famous American artist, he is at the head of a factory-like studio staffed with several dozens of assistants, who execute his canvases and sculptures, according to extremely precise instructions. His pop and hyper realistic paintings with baroque compositions require, each of them, hundreds hours of work. A major retrospective of his works will be exhibited at the Centre Pompidou in Paris from November 26, 2014 and at the Guggenheim museum in Bilbao during summer 2015.

"Cake", Oil on canvas, 125 3/8 x 116 3/8 in, 1995-97, Private collection (©Jeff Koons)

### -Thomas Lévy-Lasne / France



Thomas Lévy-Lasne was born in 1980 in Paris. He lives and works in Saint-Ouen. He is represented by Galerie Isabelle Gounod. Very attached to the history of painting, he paints in oil and watercolor various realist subjects of contemporary life. He is currently producing paintings for the film adaptation by Philippe Harel of Michel Houellebecq's novel: *The Map and the Territory*.

"Laetitia in bed", Oil on canvas, 130x195cm, 2012, Courtesy Galerie Isabelle Gounod, Private collection

**- Marc Molk / France**



Marc Molk was born in 1972 in Marseille. He lives and works in Paris. A painter and a writer, he develops a work in which these two disciplines meet and mix autobiography and fiction. His technique articulates several ways to apply the paint, from grisailles, very diluted with water, to steps of fat oil and large colourwash loaded with microfine glitters and particles, as well as other techniques such as paint sprays or gouache lines drawings.

"Mimosa Island", oil and acrylic on canvas, 162x130cm, 2014, Private collection

**- Anne Neukamp/Germany**



Anne Neukamp was born in Düsseldorf in 1976. She lives and works in Berlin. She is represented by several galleries and institutions in Germany and in France. Her work was recently shown in the context of solo exhibitions at the Kunstverein Oldenburg, Germany (2013), the Wilhelm-Hack Museum in Ludwigshafen, Germany (2012) at Galerie Valentin, Paris (2014) at Galerie Gregor Podnar, Berlin and Ljubljana (2012 and 2013). Her paintings produce a floating state between figurative motifs and an abstract, incomplete, loose cosmology. Using oil and tempera paints on large canvases, she diverts the vocabulary of the visual communications we live by: logotypes, emblems, icons, pictograms, signs, by rendering them fundamentally ambiguous.

"Languet ", Oil, tempera, acrylic on cotton, 200x150 cm, 2014, Courtesy Valentin, Paris

**- Eva Nielsen / France**



Eva Nielsen was born in 1983 in France. She lives and works in Paris. She is represented by the Dominique Fiat gallery. She won the 2009 Thaddaeus Ropac Price and the 2013 Price Art Collector. Danish-French painter, she develops her paintings from a screen printing on canvas and then modifies these often architectural structures, using oil, creating uncertain areas. Playing on the heterogeneous nature of the resulting image, her painting is like an intimate fusion of photographic appearances and oil painting.

"E.I.", Acrylic and print on canvas, 200x150 cm, 2011

**- Chéri Samba / Congo**



Chéri Samba was born in 1956 in Congo. He lives and works in Kinshasa. The most famous African painter in the world, his work is the subject of numerous exhibitions worldwide including the first Biennale of Contemporary Art Bantu (Libreville, 1985); Magicians of the Earth (Paris, 1989), and Africa Explores: 20th Century African Art (New York, 1991), or at the Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art (Paris 2004). He has received numerous retrospectives. Chéri Samba paints, with acrylics, very colorful paintings, both poetic and political. Grand Master of Popular Painting, he depicts the facts of society, customs, sexuality, disease, social inequalities, corruption, etc. Often using humor, his paintings are scanned with, at times narrative, at times theoretical, texts.

« Le petit Kadogo », Acrylic and glitters on canvas, 135x200 cm, 2010, Courtesy Galerie MAGNIN-A, Paris

**- Ida Tursic & Wilfried Mille / France**



Ida Tursic and Wilfried Mille were born in 1974, she in Belgrade, he in France. They live and work in Dijon. They are represented by Almine Rech Gallery, Galerie Pietro Sparta and Galleria Alfonso Artiaco and won the Prix Ricard in 2009; they participated in recent years "Perpetual Battles" (Jean-Max Collard) at Baibakova Art Project in Moscow in 2010, "The archipelagos reinvented"- Collection Centre Georges Pompidou, Vieille Charité, Marseille in 2013, "Choices"(Galerie Almine Rech), Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris, "Halftone", Galerie Max Heltzer, Paris and Berlin in 2014. They develop a technique very keen on the material and on the workmanship of their paintings. Some works are recycling preexisting images, from magazines, films and websites, while others, quasi-abstract, are obtained by painting directly on the canvas. Their technique is varied and often experimental.

"91 Interview May 1998 II ", Oil on canvas, 250 x 200 x 5cm, 2008, Private Collection