

André Cadere: 1964–1978
March 24–May 14, 2024

Ortuzar Projects is pleased to present *André Cadere: 1964–1978*. The first major exhibition of Cadere's artwork in New York since PS1 Contemporary Art Center's 1989 posthumous retrospective, the show begins with the artist's psychedelic paintings made in Romania and Paris in the 1960s, which are shown alongside a selection of the *barres de bois rond* for which he is best known. Presented in partnership with the Succession André Cadere, these little exhibited works provide an invaluable pre-history to a beloved figure of Conceptual Art.

In the decades since his passing, Cadere has become synonymous with his round bars of wood, the results of a rigorous system of object-making, first conceived in 1972, that he pursued with complete dedication for the last seven years of his short career. Composed using an idiosyncratic mathematical sequence that determined the order of colors (including one intentional error) and number of segments, the hand-carved bars were discrete manifestations of a single overarching procedure that allowed for only so many possible variations. Referred to as "Peinture sans fin" ("painting without end" or "unlimited painting"), the bars' total length followed the constraint that they be lightweight enough for the artist to carry, with their shape allowing for varied orientations and modes of presentation. With the aim for his work to exist outside the traditional circuits of contemporary art, the bars were brought, both invited and uninvited, into museums and galleries, and carried almost exclusively by the artist from 1973 on as he moved through his daily life.

Making appearances at the openings for artists such as Robert Ryman, Sol LeWitt, On Kawara, and Hanne Darboven, his friends Gilbert & George, and acknowledged detractor Daniel Buren, Cadere called his interlocutions within others' exhibitions "displacements." And while he referred to himself mischievously as a squatter, on more than one occasion Cadere could be said to have been forcefully evicted. It is important to remember that while he officially publicized most all of his *présentations*—which would include activities such as debates staged in pubs frequented by London's conceptual art scene, or promenades in which one could anticipate his crossing at certain location and times—in carrying the bars outside of legible art contexts he was to most of his audience anonymous and unannounced.

Largely spurned through at least 1975 for these controversial exploitations of art world decorum, and his transgression of its boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, Cadere acknowledged that his performative commitment to being seen as an outsider may have come from the fact that he came from "a country which is outside the Western cultural system, a totally marginal country." The son of a diplomat who was persecuted following the rise of the communist regime, Cadere was nevertheless able to lay the foundations of his art from 1960 to 1966, developing an original conception of space in which interlocking planes create disorienting *mise en abyme*. Escaping to Paris in 1967, Cadere has said that it was only within the cosmopolitanism of the contemporary art circuit—in "international situations"—that he did not feel like a "stranger." Once there he joined the international op-art scene, embracing a unique combination of psychedelia and the folkloric that stood in contrast to the highly mathematical works by the likes of the Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel (GRAV) then in vogue.

Blending abstraction with figures, landscapes, and biomorphic and cellular forms to disorienting effects, Cadere's early paintings indicate his later understanding of his work in terms of "pure visuality." By 1969, Cadere abandoned the canvas and his paintings began to transform into another type of object, with the artist attaching polychrome half-rods to the work's surface in *Panneau noir Citroën* in order to introduce the notion of volume for the first time. In

another 1969 diptych, two formica panels that fit together like puzzle pieces are intended to be shown on either the wall or floor. At the turn of the decade Cadere creates the first of his square, polychrome wooden bars, which lay the foundations for the system he would establish with the round bars the following year.

André Cadere (b. 1934, Warsaw; d. 1978, Paris) will be the subject of a forthcoming retrospective, *André Cadere, Expanding Art*, CAB Foundation, Brussels (2023). Recent major solo exhibitions include *André Cadere: Pas à pas*, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2018); *Textual Pieces, Photographs, Ephemera*, Galerie Hervé Bize, Nancy, France (2018); *André Cadere: Conceptual Documents 1972-1978*, Art Encounters, Timisoara, Romania (2015); *Documenting Cadere 1972-1978*, Modern Art Oxford, Mu.ZEE, Ostende, Belgium, Artists Space, New York (2013); and *André Cadere: Peinture sans fin*, Musée d'Art moderne de Paris, France, Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, Germany, and Bonnefanten Museum Maastricht, The Netherlands (2007–2008). Cadere's work is in the permanent collections of public institutions including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Art Institute of Chicago; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Musée d'art Moderne de Paris; Tate Modern, London; Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid; Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst, Antwerp; MAMCO, Genève; and the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, among others.