

## BIOGRAPHY PETER KLASSEN

1935 On August 18, Peter Klasen is born in Lübeck. He grew up in a family sensitive to the arts: his uncle, a pupil of Otto Dix, was an expressionist painter of landscapes and portraits, his grandfather, patron and collector, introduced him to the world of painters who were friends of the family.

1942 The young Klasen witnesses, on Palm Sunday, the bombardment and destruction of his native town. His father, mobilized in 1943, will be reported missing and Peter, without ever knowing the circumstances of his death, will never see him again.

1945 - 1955 Attends Katharineum High School. During long solitary walks, he draws and paints the landscapes of the surrounding countryside and the shores of the Baltic Sea, the initial influence of his uncle Karl Christian Klasen. He is deeply marked by the reading of Dostoyevsky, Kafka and Thomas Mann.

1955 He is admitted to the School of Fine Arts in Berlin, which is then in Germany, the avant-garde school. "It was never a question, for me, of doing anything other than painting". Baselitz is his classmate in Hann Trier's studio.

1959 A crucial year in Klasen's journey. He attends the opening of the second Documenta in Kassel which devotes abstraction: "Everywhere in the world informal art was practiced, it seemed to me that everything had been said, and very well said". Winner of the Patronage Prize for German Industry, he received a study grant and chose to leave for Paris: "I wanted to try another adventure. I wanted to live in France in this country that my father, who spoke the language, had taught me to love". He lets himself be carried away by the city and its deluge of images. He assiduously frequents the cinemathèque in the rue d'Ulm, sees American films, German films censored under Hitler (Fritz Lang, Murnau...) and those of the New Wave (Godard, Truffaut, Chabrol...). He rereads the theoretical writings of Dada and the Bauhaus and develops the concept of integrating photography into his pictorial work. First exhibition, in Germany as part of Ars viva.

1960 First "encounter-pictures": Klasen opposes on the same picture cut-out images and their representation painted with an airbrush.

1961 - 1966 Appearance on his canvases of the fragmented image of the female body, taken from advertising posters, cinema and magazines. This will be a constant in his work until 1973. Appearance of a torn reality: objects of everyday consumption (telephone, disc, sanitary appliances, electrical equipment, etc.), objects of seduction (lipstick), objects linked to the body and to illness (thermometer, stethoscope, syringe, pill, blade razor,...). In 1962, Klasen exhibited for the first time in France. Meeting Mathias Fels and Madame Rosa Faure. He is the pioneer of "Narrative Figuration", a revival of the image in painting. Nausea 1961, Fast Serve 1963, Body Consciousness 1964, Stripper 1965, Forbidden Zone 1965, What Woman Wants

1966. modern city of Paris. Exhibitions are on the rise. He explains his work in a text: My vocabulary.

1967 - 1970 Klasen paints his "binary" paintings, based on the opposing representation of a fragment of the human body and an object, painted or integrated, revealing his anguish in the face of the split between "being" and the world of "to see her". 100 Watt bulb, 1968. Torso + bulbs + 10 syringes, 1969. Invited to the Fondation Maeght exhibition L'art vivant 1965-68. Exhibition in Paris, Milan, Brussels, Cologne.

1971 Retrospective at the ARC Museum of Modern Art of the city of Paris, under the responsibility of Suzanne Pagé and Pierre Gaudibert: Sets and Accessories. This first personal exhibition in a museum develops a vast three-dimensional installation on the theme of the body and health, with surgical utensils, tanks, bidets, downpipes, certain objects enhanced with neon, and a series of paintings (bathtub, W.C. etc. , shown life-size). Publication in works summarizing art, Pop Art & Cie by François Pluchart, Art since 1945 by G. Gassiot-Talabot, Art in France by Jean Clair.

1973 - 1980 After the representation of the isolated object which occupies the entire canvas on a neutral background (Fauteuil dentaire A, 1972), appearance of the theme of "confinement": Klasen paints in close-up, frontally, without background, grids , barriers, padlocked doors (Rideau de fer/fond noir 1974, ETR 1974, No admittance 1978), wagons, truck covers (Truck 1972, Cooler wagon 1977). "Viewer of urban disease" (Alain Jouffroy), Klasen denounces the ambiguities of progress and technology.

"My relationship with the city is conflictual, therefore productive: it leads to creative responses. By identifying the objects of our environment, by tearing them from their functional usefulness and by translating them with the specific means of painting, I have developed an antibody language which resists the permanent aggression exerted on me by the outside world" . Exhibitions around the world, articles and books devoted to his work are multiplying: Franck Venaille, Gérald Gassiot-Talabot, Bernard Noël, Pierre Tilman, Anne Tronche. About his paintings, Henri Michaux speaks of an "astonishing dematerialization of objects". In 1977, met Claudine d'Hellemmes, his future wife, in Lille.

1981 Stay in New York. "This trip was for me the discovery of a mythical place and at the same time a rediscovery of a city that the cinema had already made known to me perfectly". The photos taken in New York (notably of graffiti) lead to Traces, an exhibition at Adrien Maeght in 1982, where, through drips, dirt, graffiti, rust..., the presence of time, wear, degradation, of the ephemeral, appears in Klasen's work, which until then was marked by the presence of the object of clinical cleanliness. "He is the historian of the walls, the archivist of inscriptions and stains" writes Gilbert Lascault. I was here definitely, 1982. Armored door, 1981-82, painting on which 30 artist friends, writers, collectors intervene.

1983 – 1985 In the large Porte d'Aubervilliers triptych, 300 x 560 cm, Klasen again uses neon, which will punctuate his work in a recurring way. Transformation in Vincennes of a vast factory with a metal frame, into a dwelling-workshop. "This architecture refers to elements that I use in my work: stripping, clarity, balance. At the same time, I find myself in a phase of liberation of gesture and color".

1986 – 1990 Retrospective exhibition at the Kunstamt Wedding in Berlin. Begins the cycle of the "Berlin Wall", a series of 100 paintings which will be completed before the fall of the wall in 1989. During the retrospective The painted work from 1960 to 1987 in Aix-en Provence, the works of large dimension Macht 1987, and in 1988, Klasen performs in front of the public, accompanied by the jazz trio Humair, Jenny-Clark and Kühn, the last painting of this cycle. Continues the identification of urban iconography, seeks to reveal its hidden side: car parks, mezzanines, abandoned objects, waste. Exit Parking 1989. The exhibition at Louis Carré & Cie is called History of Ordinary Places. Produces a series of bronze sculptures, paints a Porsche 962C for the 24 Hours of Le Mans, exhibits in Los Angeles.

Birth of his daughter Sydney in 1988. Construction of the house and the workshop in the South of France.

1991 – 1997 First personal exhibition in Tokyo. Meets the American filmmaker Samuel Fuller, and inspired by his film Shock Corridor, creates the 100 m2 environment-installation Shock Corridor/dead end shown at Fiac 1991.

Birth of his daughter Joy in 1992. Publication by Éditions de la Différence, of an important monograph, text by Alain Jouffroy. Creation of a pictorial environment of 35,000 m2 for the renovation of Parc Center n°4 de la Défense. With Hans Spinner at Opio, creates a series of sculptures (chamottée earth and objects), A radiant day 1997. Vast installation at Cargo (Marseille) of Public Works integrating on the ground, neon lights and construction site objects (pipes, fences, reels), and a wall suite of locker room doors.

1998 – 2000 Klasen revives the presence of the image of the body in Fragments, a series of large canvases, and in the Women of Letters/Iron Ladies exhibition, refers to cinema in his painting-collages by the subject and the title and presents under netting and a metal plate lit by a neon tube, a focused image of the female body. Iron Lady I/L 17, 1998. Painted the Porsche GT2 Bâche-Klasen which won the 1998 French GT Championship. The artist introduced new techniques into his work (pigment print).

The Fragments of life exhibition shows the beginning of the Beauties series, a fragmented image of the female nude enhanced with neon. Paul Virilio writes Impact Studies for the important monograph Klasen Virilio, 1999.

2002 – 2003 Develops a reflection on the fragility of human existence linked to the violence inherent in our society (terrorist attacks of September 11 in New York), which will be expressed in the works of Life is beautiful! and Elements of disaster. Participates in the Pop Art exhibition, Center Georges Pompidou.

2004 Reconnects with his fascination for cinema confronted with his keen eye on the world as in Guilty or Hantise. "Haunting of pasts that do not pass", writes Daniel Sibony. Participates in the exhibition "Boukagov or the spirit of freedom" at the Museum of Fine Arts in Kyiv, organized by Anne-Marie Pallade.

2005 Installation of Intensive-Station. Presents for the first time his photographs (1970-2005) used as the basis of his pictorial work, Nowhere Anywhere at the European House of

Photography on the initiative of Jean-Luc Monterosso, and at the Fine Art MB Gallery in Los Angeles. Publication of the book *Nowhere Anywhere Photographies 1970-2005*, with a text by Daniel Sibony, Editions Cercle d'Art.

2006 Exhibits at the France-Brazil Foundation in Rio de Janeiro and at the Oscar Niemeyer Museum in Curitiba, at the M+B Fine Art Gallery in Los Angeles. Trip to Cuba where he takes a large number of photographs for the preparation of a book. The Meymac Contemporary Art Center located in the Saint-André Abbey is showing an important Retrospective 1961-2006. Group exhibition at the Martin-Gropius-Bau in Berlin "Paintings-Malerei Center Pompidou". Begins the series of paintings *Private Dreams*, and *Cars and Girls*. The Sonia Zannettacci gallery in Geneva exhibits Peter Klasen photography and its double where paintings and photographs are shown in parallel, starting points of the painted work.

2007 Presentation at the Tamaris Art Center in La Seyne-sur-Mer directed by Robert Bonaccorsi, of an important exhibition *Nowhere Anywhere and Major Works 1995-2007*, at the Raphael 12 gallery of Frankfort Werke 1966-2006. Shows in the group exhibition *Women of the 20th Century*, a superb series of paintings, portraits in black and white with neon: *Marylin, Ô Marylin, Casablanca, the Blue Angel* etc...

His painting *Woman-Object* from 1967 is exhibited in the new presentation of the collections of the National Museum of Modern Art, Center Pompidou. series of tables. The National Museum of Fine Arts in Havana organizes *Obras 1965-2007*, retrospective. The book *Havana Gesture* comes out from Editions Art in Progress and shows under the lens of Klasen a new aspect of Havana, crossed by the gestures of a young dancer. The text by D. Colombani traces the history full of surprises of this city through photographs. The Hospice Comtesse de Lille presents *Narrative Figuration* from the 60s and 70s.

2008 The SNCF for its 70th anniversary, presents the exhibition *Art enters the station* at the Gand Palais, Paris, where the *Refrigerated Wagon* (430x195cm) from 1977 is shown. At S.M.A.K. de Gent and at Marta Herford is presented the collection *The Hands of Art* and the book *Artists' Handbook* by R. Vandeveld with 300 renowned artists of the 20th century. The San Carlo gallery in Milan is showing a series of self-portrait paintings by the artist *My private movie* at Art Paris. The Center Georges Pompidou is organizing the exhibition *Figuration Narrative, Paris 1960-1972* at the Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, where 7 historical paintings by Klasen are exhibited. On the same dates, participates with recent works in the exhibition "in resonance" organized by Anne-Marie Pallade

in his gallery in Lyon. Exhibition at the Kapapopoulos Gallery in Athens in May, catalog prefaced by Giuliano Serafini, trip to China for the 2008 Beijing Olympics exhibition.

In November, Flash-back exhibition at the San Carlo gallery in Milan.

2009 Exhibition in Houston, USA, *Frozen Light* (March), Sonja Roesch gallery.

Art Paris gallery San Carlo Milan and gallery Sonia Zannettacci Geneva.

Retrospective for the 50th anniversary of his work at the Tri Postal, Lille, more than 200 works and installations exhibited over 4,000 m2.

2010 Sens Museum Exhibition Synodal Palace. Ludwig Museum Retrospective Vorsicht  
Hochspannung, Koblenz. Arles International Photo Encounters.  
Monticelli Foundation, l'Estaque - Marseille.

2011 First retrospective in the birthplace of Peter Klasen, Kunsthalle St Annen Museum, Lubeck  
Germany.

2012 Couvent des Minimes, Perpignan Retrospective with more than 200 exhibited works and  
installations. Art Gallery, Perpignan. Sunflowers Gallery, Saint Etienne. Nathalie Clouard  
Gallery, Rennes. Laurent Strouk Gallery, Paris Right Bank. Group exhibition with Schlosser and  
Segui at the Saint Martin Museum, Montélimar. Exhibition White Spaces Lost Landscapes  
Gallery Guy Pieters Knokke le Zoute. Acquisition of a monumental work (2.60 m x 7.00 m) by  
the media library of the city of Vincennes.

2013 Exhibitions Selected Works and White Spaces / Lost Landscapes at the Confluence(s)  
gallery of the IUFM and at the Anne-Marie and Roland Pallade gallery, Lyon. Group exhibition  
"Le Mal Now" Topography of Art, Paris. Summer exhibition of a selection of a hundred works  
from 1960/2013, at the Touquet-Paris-Plage museum. Art Elysée 2013 "One man show"  
presented by the gallery L'Estampe, Strasbourg. Photo exhibition at the Art Cube gallery, Paris.  
One man show exhibition, Laurent Strouk gallery, Paris.

2014 Galerie les Petits Papiers, Brussels. Cloudard Gallery, Rennes. Mecanica Gallery, Paris  
and Los Angeles. ArtCube Gallery, Paris. BOA Gallery, Paris.  
Sino-French P'Art monumental sculpture Canton, China.

2015 Exhibition Art Basel Switzerland, ArtCube Paris Gallery. The Royal Ice Rink in Brussels.  
Retrospective center d'art l'Aspirateur, Narbonne. Art Gallery, Perpignan. Art Fair Carousel of  
the Louvre, Paris. Artbribus, Istres. Print Gallery, Strasbourg. Art Elysee, Paris

2016 Palais de Tokyo Paris, Featured Artists. Prints Gallery, Strasbourg. Anne-Marie and  
Roland Pallade Gallery, Lyon. Stämpfli Foundation, Sitges-Spain. Cristel Art Center, Saint-Malo.  
National Assembly, Paris. Chateau de Val, Correze. Opiom Gallery, Opio.  
BOA Paris Gallery, Art Fair 2016, Gwangju-South Korea.

2017 ART-UP LILLE. The Red House, Paris. ART PARIS, Paris. Art Gallery Design, Le Touquet  
Paris-Plage.

2018 Eva Hober Gallery, Paris. POSCO Museum, Seoul South Korea.

2019 La Monnaie Museum Paris. ART-UP LILLE. Gandur CAPC Bordeaux Foundation  
Collection.

Biennale de Paris Pavilion of Bahrain, Grand Palais Paris. Galerie BOA Paris exhibition on the  
cycle of the Berlin Wall.

2020 La Serre Montpellier, Space for contemporary art of the White Tree. Absolute Art Space,  
Paris. ART PARIS Grand Palais, Patrice Trigano Gallery.

2021 Exhibition "Imagine yourself..." Palace of Arts and Festival City of Dinard.