

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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JEAN DUBUFFET: The Radiant Earth
February 22-March 23, 1996

The **Radiant Earth**, an exhibition of fifty paintings and sculptures by Jean Dubuffet from the 1950s, will be on view at PaceWildenstein, 32 East 57th Street, from February 22-March 23, 1996. The exhibition focuses on Dubuffet's investigation of, and journey into, the natural world.

Following his *Corps de Dames* series (1950), which characterized the artist's interest in the body as landscape, Dubuffet introduced fragments of nature, in the form of butterfly wings and other organic and raw elements, into his paintings and sculpture.

The **Radiant Earth** features eight *ailes de papillons* (butterfly wing collages); seven *éléments botaniques* (botanical element paintings); six *texturologies* and sixteen *petites statues de la vie précaire* (sculptures) as well as thirteen landscape paintings including *sols et terrains*, *tableaux d'assemblages*, and *materiologies*.

"The fifties saw the fulfillment of Dubuffet's concrete reality and the establishment of a new vocabulary for landscape painting. He extended his use of materials to include properties from the natural world and firmly established his process of building images by the proliferation of cells. In the course of the decade, landscapes gave way to sharp focus fragments of textured mud. Zooming close, Dubuffet revealed the random patterns made by grains of sand, seeds, and fissures in the earth. Eventually, the fruits of the earth — tobacco leaves, banana leaves and various plant material collages — brought to a close Dubuffet's decade-long obsession with the earth and its radiance," notes Arne Glimcher in the accompanying exhibition catalogue.

A student of the Academie Julian in Paris 1918, Jean Dubuffet (1901-1985) left the school to pursue his own study of art and developed an appreciation for literature, languages, and music. After fulfilling his military service, traveling, and pursuing an occupation in his family's wine business, Dubuffet returned full-time to painting in 1942. His first exposure in America came in the late 1940s with an exhibition at the Pierre Matisse Gallery.

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Dubuffet was one of the most enigmatic, influential, and prolific artists of the century. Like many of his generation in Europe in the wake of the nightmare of World War II, Dubuffet sought artistic authenticity not within the confines of European traditions, but looked to those on the margins of art: the socially isolated — the insane, prisoners — and to a limited degree, the art of children. He believed art should be a matter of “permanent revolution.” Dubuffet's positions had a profound effect on the anti-formalist movements of post-war Europe and America.

In his lifetime Jean Dubuffet was the subject of twelve major museum retrospectives including The Museum of Modern Art (1962) which traveled to the Art Institute of Chicago and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (1962); Tate Gallery, London (1966); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1966); Museum of Fine Arts, Dallas (1966) which traveled to the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Musée des Beaux-Arts, Montreal (1969-70) and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (1973, 1981). Dubuffet's paintings, sculpture, and drawings are in several public collections throughout the United States and Europe.

PaceWildenstein is grateful to the private collectors and museums: the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C., The Museum of Modern Art, New York; and the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., who generously loaned their works to **The Radiant Earth**.

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