

# TEMPLON

## II

Press release  
July 26, 2018

### GEORGES MATHIEU

#### *The 60's & 70's*

September 8 – October 20, 2018

Opening : Friday September 7, from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm



Torque, 1965, oil on canvas 25 5/8 x 45 5/8 in.

Galerie Templon's new exhibition offers visitors the chance to rediscover one of the most singular and emblematic painters in French contemporary art: Georges Mathieu. The self-proclaimed founder of lyrical abstraction, Georges Mathieu shot to fame in the 1950s and 1970s before finding himself into purgatory until his death in 2012. The exhibition features around thirty paintings created between 1960 and 1979, demonstrating the significance and inventiveness of a body of work that left a lasting impression on French art and imagination.

The period covered by the exhibition represents Georges Mathieu's work at its pinnacle. Pioneering a form of gestural abstraction that was close to performance, Georges Mathieu, with his dazzling brilliance, a famed-provocateur could be seen as the prototype of today's star artist. In his quest to transcend the notion of the avant-garde, he developed a form of painting where speed and spontaneity became key. Sometimes working in front of the cameras, his work exhibited throughout the world, he was famed for his large-scale formats where the unadulterated paint spurts from the tube. He brought a new brand of freedom to the creative gesture, rooted in emotion, violence and subjectivity. Freedom that then gave birth to a brand new style, somewhere between esoteric sign, calligraphy and raw energy. The titles, often steeped in historical, musical and geographical references, add a poetic quality, both sophisticated and offbeat. In 1971, Pierre Dehaye said: "In the twenty years since lyrical abstraction began, never before has the artist attained this uniformity of luminosity and overall balance. Each painting is a celebration." In 1975, Georges Mathieu was elected to the Academy of Fine Arts. The 10-franc coin he created for the Paris Mint is in circulation. He designed the logo for the public television channel Antenne 2. His style was thus assimilated into daily life in France, making a profound impact on the collective imagination.

Daniel Templon often refers to the moment when he discovered Georges Mathieu's Capétiens in 1965, a "real visual shock" that triggered his desire to become a gallerist. Galerie Templon has published a catalogue to mark the exhibition, featuring texts by Edouard Lombard (president of the Comité Georges Mathieu) and American art historian AnnMarie Perl (Princeton) which analyse the importance of his historical contribution and the underpinnings of his international reception.