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René Magritte, *L'Ecole Buissonniere*, 1946

ARTIST

René Magritte

TITLE

L'Ecole Buissioniere

MEDIUM

Gouache on paper

DATE

1946

SIZE

15 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 23 $\frac{1}{4}$ in : 40.3 x 59.1 cm

FRAME SIZE

28 x 35 in : 71.0 x 88.7 cm

INSCRIPTIONS

Signed lower left: 'magritte'; signed, titled and dated on the reverse

PROVENANCE

Rose Bauwens & Joseph Capel, Argentina (a gift from the artist in 1960)

Thence by descent
Private Collection

EXHIBITED

(possibly) Brussels, Galerie Dietrich, Magritte, 1946, no. 3
Skärhamn, Nordiska Akvarellmuseet, Magritte, A Lab of Ideas, 7 May 2022 - 3 September 2022, illustrated in the exhibition catalogue p. 74

LITERATURE

Le Fait accompli, no. 34-5, Brussels, April 1970, illustrated in an installation photograph of the Galerie Dietrich exhibition
David Sylvester (ed.), Sarah Whitfield & Michael Raeburn, René Magritte, Catalogue Raisonné, Antwerp, 1994, vol. IV, appendix no. 140, catalogued p. 325

CERTIFICATION

The authenticity of this work has been confirmed by the Comité Magritte

REFERENCE

AC24-19

René Magritte

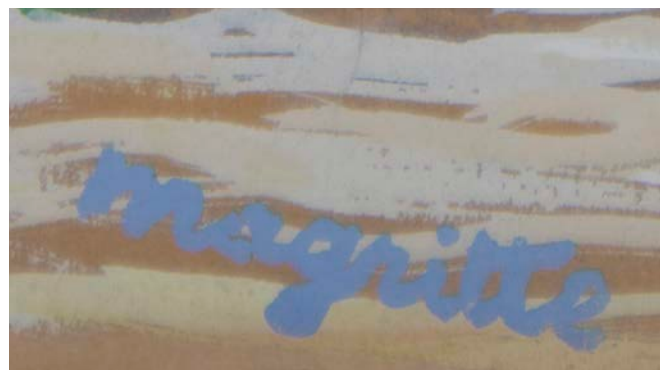
René François Ghislain Magritte was a Belgian surrealist artist, well known for his witty and thought-provoking images which challenged viewers' preconditioned perceptions of reality. His imagery has influenced pop, minimalist and conceptual art, as well as the work of the artists John Baldessari, Ed Ruscha, Andy Warhol, Jasper Johns, and Martin Kippenberger. Magritte's influence in the development of Pop art has been widely recognized, although Magritte himself discounted the connection.

Magritte's earliest paintings, which date from about 1915, were Impressionistic in style. He studied at the Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, later becoming influenced by Futurism and by the figurative Cubism of Metzinger. In 1926, Magritte produced his first surreal painting, *The Lost Jockey* (*Le jockey perdu*), and held his first exhibition in Brussels in 1927. Critics heaped abuse on the exhibition. Depressed by the failure, he moved to Paris where he became friends with André Breton, and became involved in the surrealist group. He became a leading member of the movement after leaving in 1927 for Paris, returning only due to despondency over the pace of his career's progress.

During the German occupation of Belgium in World War II he remained in Brussels, which led to a break with Breton. In 1946, renouncing the violence and pessimism of his earlier work, he joined several other Belgian artists in signing the manifesto *Surrealism in Full Sunlight*. During 1947–48, Magritte's "Vache Period", he painted in a provocative and crude Fauve style. During this time, Magritte supported himself through the production of fake Picassos, Braques and Chiricos—a fraudulent repertoire he was later to expand into the printing of forged banknotes during the lean postwar period. At the end of 1948, he returned to the style and themes of his prewar surrealist art.

Magritte's work frequently displays a collection of ordinary objects in an unusual context, giving new meanings to familiar things. The use of objects as other than what they seem is typified in his painting, *'The Treachery of Images'* (*La trahison des images*), which shows a pipe that looks as though it is a model for a tobacco store advertisement. Magritte painted below the pipe "Ceci n'est pas une pipe" ("This is not a pipe"), which seems a contradiction, but is actually true: the painting is not a pipe, it is an image of a pipe. It does not "satisfy emotionally"—when Magritte was once asked about this image, he replied that of course it was not a pipe, just try to fill it with tobacco.

Popular interest in Magritte's work rose considerably in the 1960s, and he is now considered one of the most famous Belgians who ever lived. His works have been frequently adapted or plagiarized in advertisements, posters, book covers and the like, and his imagery has inspired filmmakers ranging from the surrealist Marcel Mariën to mainstream directors such as Jean-Luc Godard, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Bernardo Bertolucci, Nicolas Roeg, John Boorman and Terry Gilliam.





Magritte died in 1967, aged 68. He has had two retrospective exhibitions in New York, one at the Museum of Modern Art in 1965, and the other at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1992.

The Magritte Museum opened to the public on 30 May 2009 in Brussels. Housed in the five-level neo-classical Hotel Altenloh, on the Place Royale, it displays some 200 original Magritte paintings, drawings and sculptures. This multidisciplinary permanent installation is the biggest Magritte archive anywhere and most of the work is directly from the collection of the artist's widow, Georgette Magritte, and from Irene Hamoir Scutenaire, who was his primary collector. Additionally, the museum includes Magritte's experiments with photography from 1920 on and the short surrealist films he made from 1956 on.

Another museum is located at 135 Rue Esseghe in Brussels in Magritte's former home, where he lived with his wife from 1930 to 1954. A painting, Olympia (1948), a nude portrait of Magritte's wife by Magritte, was stolen from this museum on the morning of 24 September 2009 by two armed men. The stolen work was said to be worth about US\$1.1 million. Olympia was returned to the museum early January 2012. The thieves handed back the painting because they were unable to sell it on the black market due to its fame.

This work is accompanied by a handwritten and signed two-page letter from René Magritte on his letterhead dated 18th December, 1961 to Rose Capel, the original owner of the picture.

18 décembre 1961

Chère Madame, Je viens de recevoir votre lettre du 29 novembre et je vous en remercie. Je vous ai écrit pour répondre à une lettre que vous m'avez envoyée il y a un ou deux ans ?

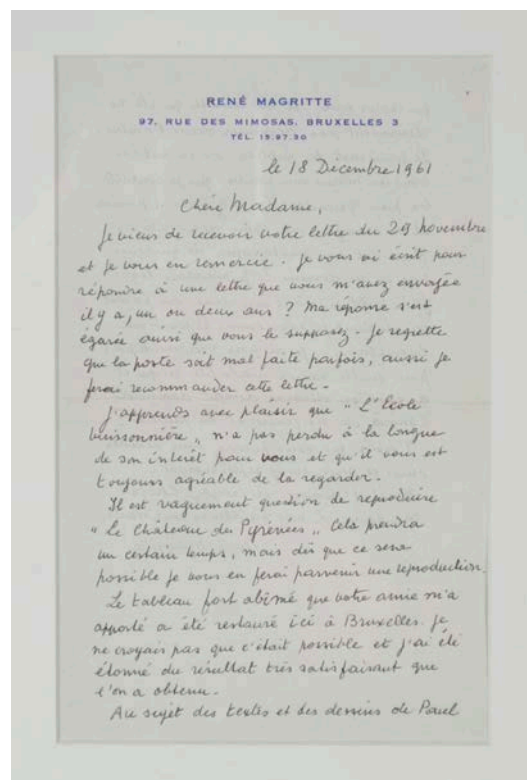
Ma réponse s'est égarée ainsi que vous le supposez.

Je regrette que la poste soit mal faite parfois, aussi je ferai recommander cette lettre. J'apprends avec plaisir que «L'École Buissonnière» n'a pas perdu à la longue de son intérêt pour vous et qu'il vous est toujours agréable de la regarder.

Il est vaguement question de reproduire «Le Château de Pyrénées». Cela prendra un certain temps, mais dès que ce sera possible je vous en ferai parvenir une reproduction. Le tableau fort abîmé que votre ami m'a apporté a été restauré ici à Bruxelles. Je ne croyais pas que c'était possible et j'ai été étonné du résultat très satisfaisant que l'on obtenu. Au sujet des textes et dessin de Paul (Colinet) que vous avez, il me semble qu'ils ne devraient pas demeurer dans l'ombre. Il faudrait les publier, ou en publier tout au moins une partie, que je souhaite la plus grande. Voudriez-vous y penser et m'envoyer une copie de écrits de Paul et une photocopie de quelques-uns de ces dessins ?

Je pourrais les faire publier dans une revue qui parait ici et dont je vous envoie ci-joint un exemplaire. Je ne vois vraiment pas pour quelle raison valable ce qu'il a écrit ou dessiné devrait demeurer ignoré, de ses amis et du public ? J'espère que vous pourrez vous décider dans ce sens, en y réfléchissant. Merci d'avance et croyez Chère Madame à mes meilleurs sentiments.

René Magritte





Translation

Dear Madam, I have just received your letter of the 29th November and I thank you for it. I am writing to reply to a letter you sent me a year or two ago?

My answer has got lost, as you could guess.

I regret that the post service is poorly managed sometimes, so I will make sure this letter gets to you. I am pleased to learn that "L'École Buissonnière" has not lost its long-lasting interest for you and that it is still a pleasure to look at it.

It is vaguely a question of reproducing "The Castle of Pyrenees". It will take some time, but as soon as soon as it is possible I will send you a reproduction. The damaged picture that your friend brought me has been restored here in Brussels. I did not think it was possible and I was amazed at the very good result we got. With regards to the texts and drawing of Paul (Colinet) that you have, it seems to me that they should not remain in the shadows. They should be published, or published at least in part, which I wish the greatest. Would you like to think about it and send me a copy of Paul's writings and a copy of some of these drawings?

I could have them published in a magazine which appears here and which I am sending you a copy of with this letter. I really do not see why what he wrote or drew should remain undiscovered by his friends and the public? I hope you can make a decision in this way, thinking about it. With thanks in advance and please be assured of my best wishes.

René Magritte



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