



# SOULAGES at 100

PAINTINGS AND PRINTS FROM 7 DECADES OF WORK

**ARCHEUS / POST-MODERN**

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The first print made by Pierre Soulages dates from 1952 and may not have been made at all had a chance event not taken place one year earlier.

Madeleine Lacourière, of the Lacourière printing workshop, had been walking past the window of Galerie Carré in Paris where Soulages had a painting in an exhibition. She tracked the artist down and asked him to work with their studio on two editions, a proposal which Soulages was initially reluctant to consider because he knew nothing about any printmaking process. Mme Lacourière was not easily dissuaded however and continued to charm the artist until he agreed to her suggestion. *"If you are pleased with the results", she told him, "we will publish the prints. If it doesn't work out, it will just be a little wasted time for both of us."* The Lacourières put their studio at Soulages' disposal and taught him the basic principles of etching and aquatint.

The two prints from that early time were so-called interpretation prints, etchings in colour that were based on two of his existing paintings. Although the prints were quite beautiful, 5 years passed before Soulages would again attempt to make any more. The first two works had not satisfied his need to create, which he held as a necessary value in whichever medium he chose. Making versions of images he had already created was not what he wanted to do. In 1957 he returned to Lacourière to learn more but also visited and worked with Mourlot, who was Picasso's printer, to open himself to a variety of teaching. One day in Lacourière's studio Soulages made an accidental discovery which changed his outlook entirely.



Soulages' natural etching style had been to scrape away the varnished surface to expose the copper plate, in gestures that moved back towards him, rather than to incise by way of a pushing motion. When a design had begun to take shape, the copper plate would be bathed in acid and the acid would bite where the copper had been exposed, deepening the gestures. Soulages would let prolonged acid exposure become part of the creative process, achieving random effects which the artist found pleasing and would work with and around. The deeper the cavities in the plate, the greater would be the eventual ink load on the paper. Roger Lacourière cautioned Soulages against going too far, *"as long as there is copper Pierre, there is hope."* The inevitable happened though. The artist went too far and the acid ate through the copper plate in places. Lacourière shook his head, laughed and told Soulages that, as far as that particular plate was concerned, *"it's over."*

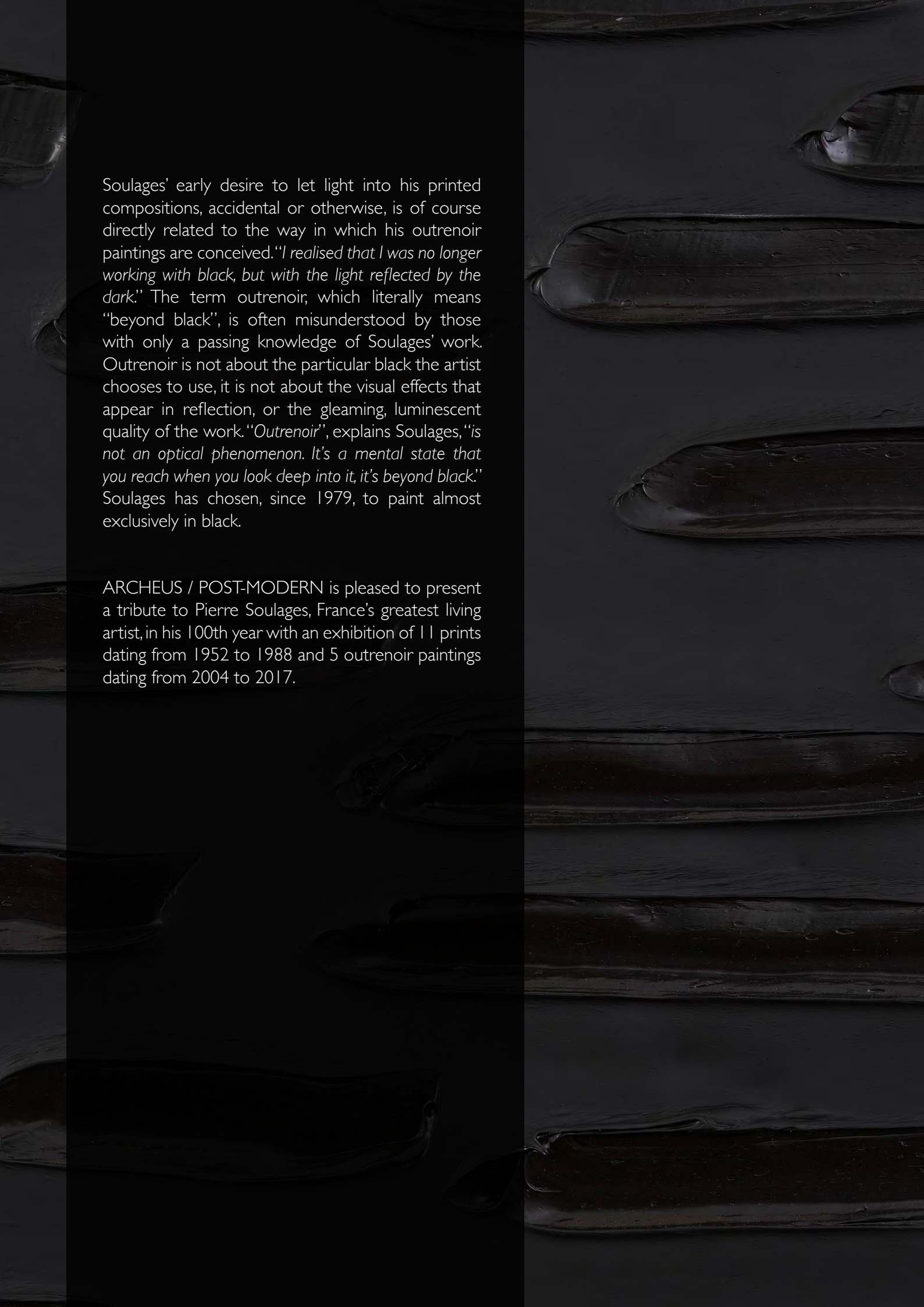
*"I", recalled Soulages, "a little out of spite and a little out of curiosity, I printed the plate with the hole I had made and then realised a great thing that I could not have foreseen. When the paper is pressed on a copper plate, under the press, which is a kind of rolling mill, the flesh of the paper is no longer the same, it has become smooth, burnished by the copper. Where the copper has been holed, the paper is spared, it keeps its paper life and I found it beautiful. The hole I made left white paper, but it was not the same white...because of the contrasts with the surrounding colours it seemed even whiter."*





Soulages extended this practice by removing parts of the copper plate so that it no longer had a rectangular border; "*Why should a rectangular sheet of paper still be printed with a rectangle?*" For some prints the artist would use more than his own bodyweight in acid to achieve the depth of ink saturation he strived for, in his words "*provoking the material, bringing out surprises, unforeseen events, taking risks and seizing chances.*" In this way his printmaking kept pace with his painting practice which was, after all, a long journey towards black. Working in this way became a source of great satisfaction for Soulages, who had finally found how to make prints in the way he approached his paintings, creating material form and colour at the same time. Soulages worked also in lithograph and in silkscreen, and in each medium he managed to deviate from the normal established practices, seizing on chance effects and developing them in ways that had not been previously explored. He would work directly on printed proofs, adjusting them before printing them again, constantly developing his imagery and increasing the scale of the sheets on which he worked.





Soulages' early desire to let light into his printed compositions, accidental or otherwise, is of course directly related to the way in which his *outrenoir* paintings are conceived. *"I realised that I was no longer working with black, but with the light reflected by the dark."* The term *outrenoir*, which literally means "beyond black", is often misunderstood by those with only a passing knowledge of Soulages' work. *Outrenoir* is not about the particular black the artist chooses to use, it is not about the visual effects that appear in reflection, or the gleaming, luminescent quality of the work. *"Outrenoir", explains Soulages, "is not an optical phenomenon. It's a mental state that you reach when you look deep into it, it's beyond black."* Soulages has chosen, since 1979, to paint almost exclusively in black.

ARCHEUS / POST-MODERN is pleased to present a tribute to Pierre Soulages, France's greatest living artist, in his 100th year with an exhibition of 11 prints dating from 1952 to 1988 and 5 *outrenoir* paintings dating from 2004 to 2017.



The background is a textured, greyish-brown surface. Overlaid on this are several thick, black, expressive brushstrokes. A large, irregular black shape dominates the upper half of the image. Below it, there are more horizontal and vertical black strokes of varying thicknesses, some appearing as if they are layered or overlapping. The word "PRINTS" is centered in the middle of the image, in a white, sans-serif font.

# PRINTS

I

**TITLE**

Eau-forte I

**MEDIUM**

Etching and aquatint on Arches paper

**DATE**

1952

**SIZE**

25 x 19¾ in : 63.5 x 50.2 cm

**EDITION**

From the edition of 100

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed and numbered in pencil

**PRINTER**

Printed by Lacourière, Paris

**PUBLISHER**

Published by Lacourière, Paris

**LITERATURE**

"Soulages l'œuvre imprimé", Pierre Encrevé & Marie-Cécile Miessner; Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2003, Cat. I (col. illus. pl. I) and indexed p.185

**REFERENCE**

A19-78



This edition was the first print ever made by Pierre Soulages, dating from 1952. Soulages' first explorations in print were in the medium of etching and aquatint. Soulages was persuaded to try etching by Mme Lacourière, the wife of a printer and publisher, who had been inspired to approach the artist after having seen his paintings through the window of the Galerie Carré in Paris. In 1951 he visited the Lacourières' neighbouring studio, and his first etchings date from the following year.





2

**TITLE**

Eau-forte V

**MEDIUM**

Etching and aquatint  
on Rives paper

**DATE**

1957

**SIZE**

19 11/16 x 26 in : 50.0 x 66.0 cm

**EDITION**

From the edition of 100

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed and numbered in pencil

**PRINTER**

Printed by Lacourière, Paris

**PUBLISHER**

Published by Lacourière, Paris

**LITERATURE**

"Soulages l'œuvre imprimé", Pierre Encrevé  
& Marie-Cécile Miessner; Bibliothèque  
nationale de France, 2003, Cat. 5 (col. illus.  
pl. 5) and indexed p.185

**REFERENCE**

A19-70







3

**TITLE**

Eau-forte IX

**MEDIUM**

Etching and aquatint on Rives paper

**DATE**

1957

**SIZE**

26 x 19 11/16 in : 66.0 x 50.0 cm

**EDITION**

From the edition of 100

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed and numbered in pencil

**PRINTER**

Printed by Lacourière, Paris

**PUBLISHER**

Published by Lacourière, Paris

**LITERATURE**

"Soulages l'œuvre imprimé", Pierre Encrevé & Marie-Cécile Miessner, Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2003, Cat. 9 (col. illus. pl. 8) and indexed p.185

**REFERENCE**

A19-62





A dedication copy to Alvin Epstein (1925-2018), who was a celebrated classical stage actor and director who appeared in the Broadway premiere of *Waiting for Godot* and went on to become widely known for his mastery of works by Samuel Beckett. He was a founding member of the American Repertory Company as well as the Yale Repertory Theater and was long affiliated with nonprofit and regional theater. Epstein met and befriended Pierre Soulages and Pierrette Bloch while studying mime in Paris with Marcel Marceau, and the friendships continued whenever they visited New York.

4

#### TITLE

Lithographie n° 1

#### MEDIUM

Lithograph in colours on Arches paper

#### DATE

1957

#### SIZE

26 x 20 in : 66.0 x 50.5 cm

#### EDITION

An artist's proof aside from the edition of 60

#### INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed "épreuve d'artiste" lower left and dedicated "Au Dr. A. Epstein avec mes sentiments amicaux et reconnaissant" and signed, lower right in pencil

#### PRINTER

Printed by Mourlot, Paris

#### PUBLISHER

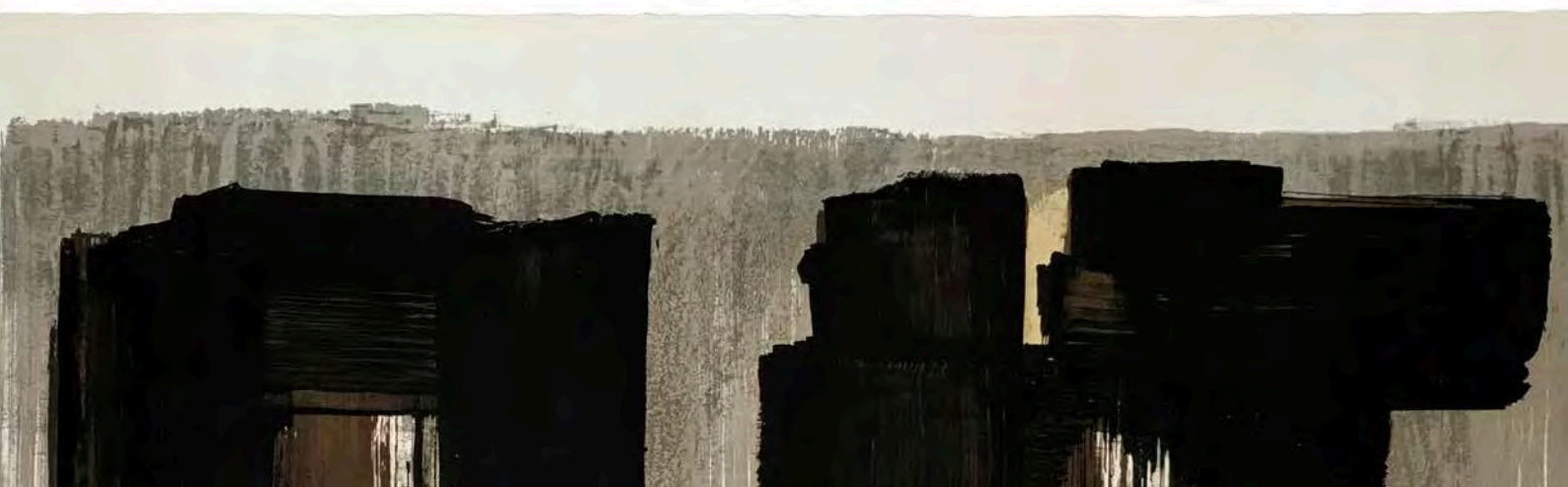
Published by Berggruen, Paris

#### LITERATURE

"Soulages l'œuvre imprimé", Pierre Encrevé & Marie-Cécile Miessner, Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2003, Cat. 44 (col. illus. pl. 43) and indexed p.188

#### REFERENCE

A19-63





5

**TITLE**

Lithographie n° 17

**MEDIUM**

An unique Bon à Tirer lithographic proof, extensively inscribed by the artist

**DATE**

1963

**SIZE**

32.3 x 24.4 cm : 12 ¾ x 9 5/8 in

**EDITION**

A proof before the edition of unknown size created for Art de France [no 4] , published in 1964

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed lower right in pencil, and extensively inscribed with printing instructions also in the artist's hand in pencil

**PRINTER**

Printed by Mourlot, Paris

**PUBLISHER**

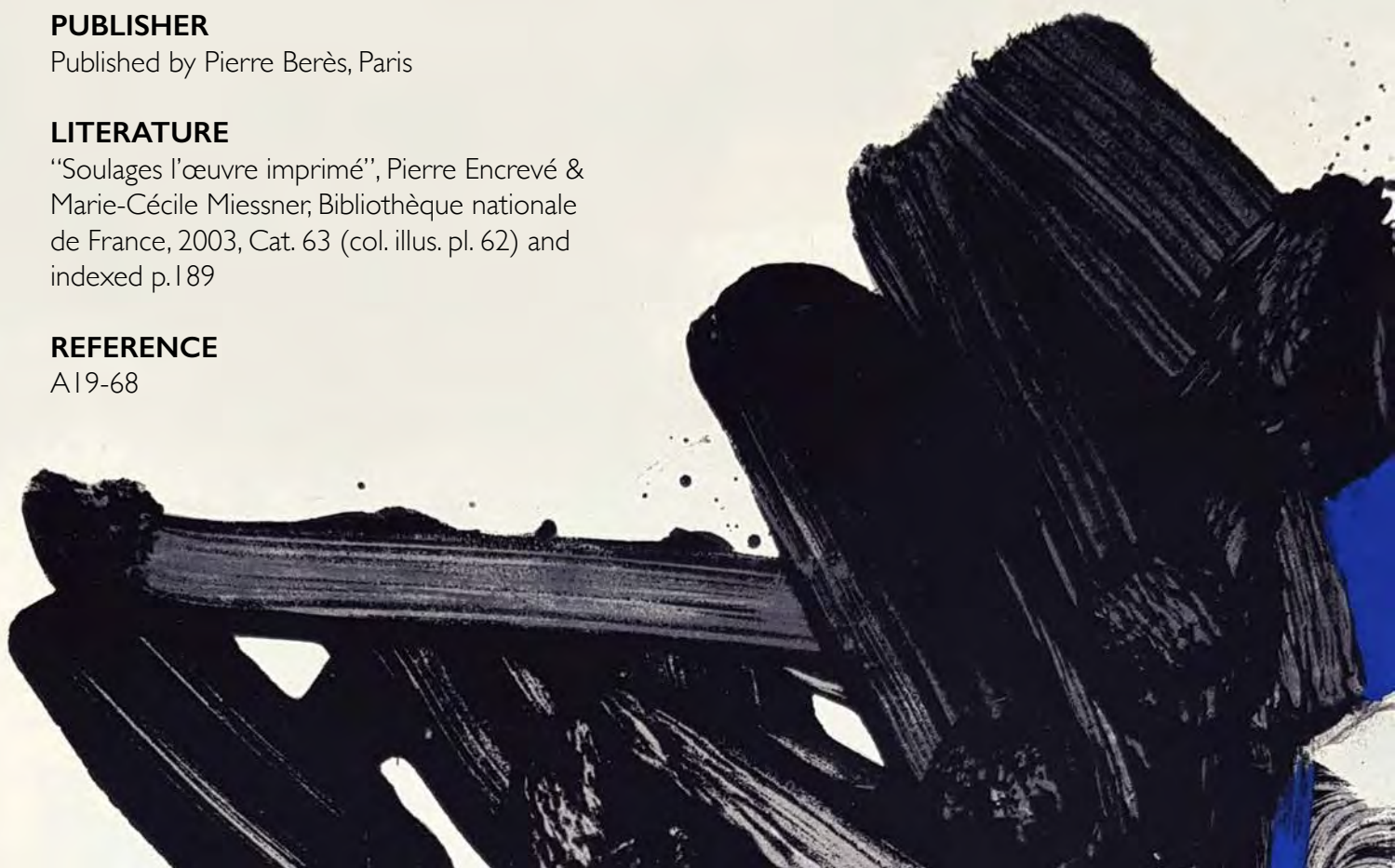
Published by Pierre Berès, Paris

**LITERATURE**

"Soulages l'œuvre imprimé", Pierre Encrevé & Marie-Cécile Miessner, Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2003, Cat. 63 (col. illus. pl. 62) and indexed p.189

**REFERENCE**

A19-68





6

**TITLE**

Lithographie n° 24b

**TITLE NOTES**

(variante avec rouge)

**MEDIUM**

Lithograph on Arches paper

**DATE**

1969

**SIZE**

31 1/8 x 22 in : 79.0 x 56.0 cm

**EDITION**

From the edition of 85

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed and numbered in pencil

**PRINTER**

Printed by Mourlot, Paris

**PUBLISHER**

Published by Galerie de France, Paris

**LITERATURE**

"Soulages l'œuvre imprimé", Pierre Encrevé & Marie-Cécile Miessner, Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2003, Cat. 72 (col. illus. pl. 71) and indexed p.190

**REFERENCE**

A19-72







**7**

**TITLE**

Lithographie n° 34

**MEDIUM**

Lithograph in colours on Arches paper

**DATE**

1974

**SIZE**

26 ½ x 20 in : 67.5 x 50.5 cm

**EDITION**

From the edition of 95

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed and numbered in pencil

**PRINTER**

Printed by Mourlot, Paris

**PUBLISHER**

Published by Galerie de France, Paris

**LITERATURE**

"Soulages l'œuvre imprimé", Pierre Encrevé & Marie-Cécile Miessner; Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2003, Cat. 83 (col. illus. pl. 82) and indexed p.191

**REFERENCE**

A19-56



8

**TITLE**

Lithographie n° 36

**MEDIUM**

Lithograph on Arches paper

**DATE**

1974

**SIZE**

29 1/8 x 22 in : 74.0 x 56.0 cm

**EDITION**

From the edition of 95

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed and numbered in pencil

**PRINTER**

Printed by Mourlot, Paris

**PUBLISHER**

Published by Galerie de France, Paris

**LITERATURE**

"Soulages l'œuvre imprimé", Pierre Encrevé & Marie-Cécile Miessner, Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2003, Cat. 85 (col. illus. pl. 84) and indexed p.191

**REFERENCE**

AC20-02







9

**TITLE**

Sérigraphie n° 15

**MEDIUM**

Screenprint in colours

**DATE**

1981

**SIZE**

41 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 28 $\frac{3}{4}$  in : 106.0 x 73.0 cm

**EDITION**

An artist's proof from the edition of 45, aside from the regular edition of 200

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed, numbered and inscribed 'E.A' in pencil lower left

**PRINTER**

Printed by Michel Caza, Cergy

**PUBLISHER**

Published by Circle Fine Art, Chicago

**LITERATURE**

"Soulages l'œuvre imprimé", Pierre Encrevé & Marie-Cécile Miessner, Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2003, Cat. 107 (col. illus. pl. 106) and indexed p.192

**REFERENCE**

A19-61

10

**TITLE**

Sérigraphie n° 16

**MEDIUM**

Screenprint in colours

**DATE**

1981

**SIZE**

41 ½ x 29 ½ in : 105.5 x 75.0 cm

**EDITION**

An artist's proof from the edition of 45,  
aside from the regular edition of 200

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed, numbered and inscribed 'E.A'  
in pencil lower right

**PRINTER**

Printed by Michel Caza, Cergy

**PUBLISHER**

Published by Circle Fine Art, Chicago

**LITERATURE**

"Soulages l'œuvre imprimé", Pierre  
Encrevé & Marie-Cécile Miessner,  
Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2003,  
Cat. 108 (col. illus. pl. 112) and indexed  
p.193

**REFERENCE**

A19-60







This work was created to celebrate the occasion of the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

II

**TITLE**

Sérigraphie n° 18

**MEDIUM**

Screenprint in colours

**DATE**

1988

**SIZE**

35 x 27 in : 89.0 x 68.5 cm

**EDITION**

From the edition of 300

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed and numbered in pencil

**PRINTER**

Printed by Michel Caza, Cergy

**PUBLISHER**

Published by SPADM, Paris

**LITERATURE**

"Soulages l'œuvre imprimé", Pierre Encrevé & Marie-Cécile Miessner, Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2003, Cat. I 10 (col. illus. pl. 109) and indexed (incorrectly listed as a single edition of 150) p.193

**REFERENCE**

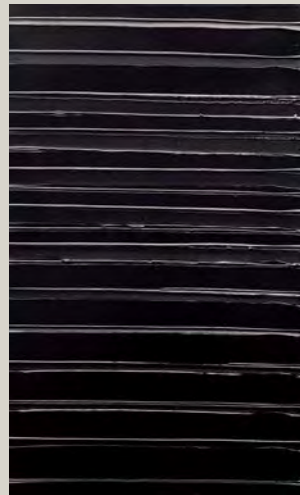
A19-77





# PAINTINGS





**I2**

**TITLE**

Peinture 130 x 81 cm, 18 juin 2004

**MEDIUM**

Acrylic on canvas

**DATE**

2004

**SIZE**

51 3/16 x 31 7/8 in : 130.0 x 81.0 cm

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed, dated and titled on the reverse

**PROVENANCE**

Acquired directly from the artist; Bernard Jacobson Gallery, London; Archeus Fine Art, London; Private Collection, New York

**LITERATURE**

P. Encrevé, Soulages L'oeuvre complet, Peintures, Vol. IV 1997 -2013, no. 1280, p. 144 (illustrated in colour)

**EXHIBITED**

with Jan Krugier Gallery, New York, 2005;  
"Soulages at 100", ARCHEUS / POST-MODERN  
at the Armory Show, New York,  
4-8 March 2020, n°12

**NOTES**

This work is not for sale

**REFERENCE**

AC20-08



Peinture 181 x 91 cm, 7 avril 2007





**I3**

**TITLE**

Peinture 181 x 91 cm, 7 avril 2007

**MEDIUM**

Acrylic on canvas

**DATE**

2007

**SIZE**

71 1/4 x 31 7/8 in : 181.0 x 91.0 cm

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed and dated on the reverse

**PROVENANCE**

Acquired directly from the artist;  
Lévy Gorvy, New York

**LITERATURE**

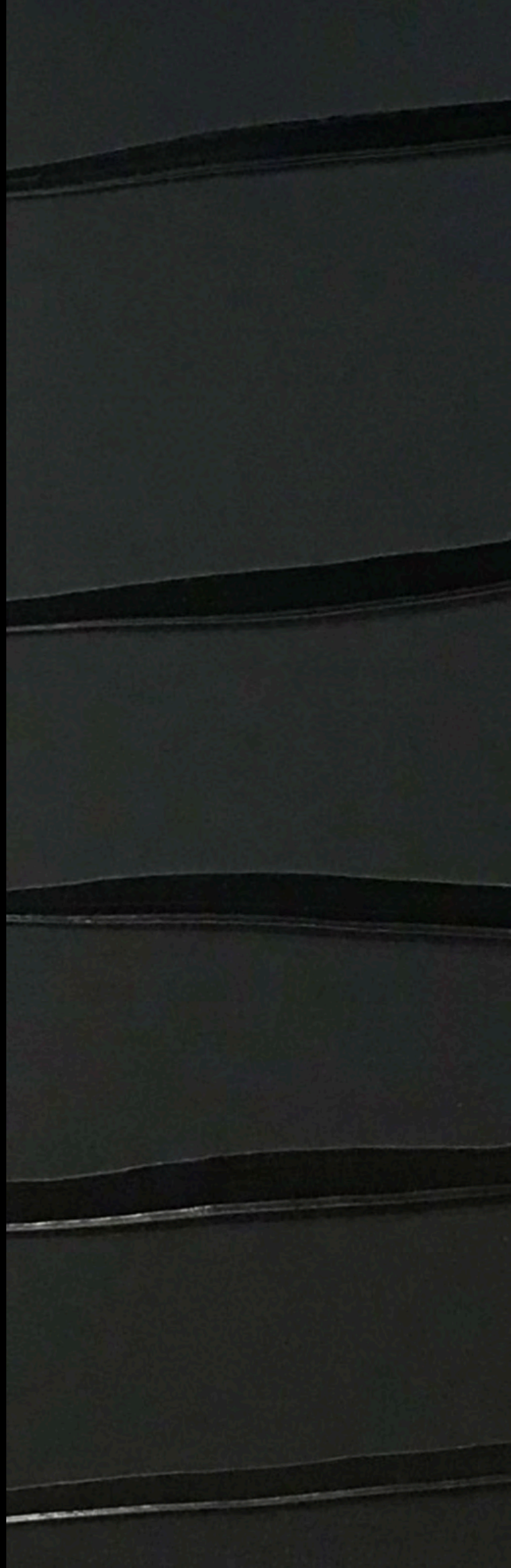
P. Encrevé, Soulages L'oeuvre complet,  
Peintures, Vol. IV 1997 - 2013, no. 1355,  
p. 249 (illustrated in colour)

**EXHIBITED**

"Soulages at 100", ARCHEUS / POST-  
MODERN at the Armory Show,  
New York, 4-8 March 2020, n° I3

**REFERENCE**

AC20-06



**TITLE**

Peinture 91 x 181 cm, 26 décembre 2014

**MEDIUM**

Acrylic on canvas

**DATE**

2014

**SIZE**

35 13/16 x 71 1/4 in : 91.0 x 181.0 cm

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed, dated and titled on the reverse

**PROVENANCE**

Acquired directly from the artist; Private Collection, New York

**LITERATURE**

This work will be included in the forthcoming volume V of "Soulages, L'œuvre Complet, Peintures" currently in preparation

**NOTES**

This work is not for sale

**REFERENCE**

AC20-07

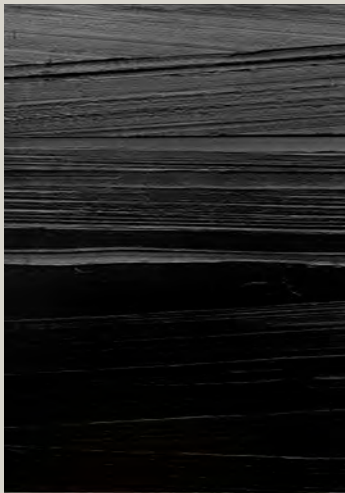






Peinture 202 x 143 cm, 14 août 2015





**I5**

**TITLE**

Peinture 202 x 143 cm, 14 août 2015

**MEDIUM**

Acrylic on canvas

**DATE**

2015

**SIZE**

79 1/2 x 56 1/4 in : 202.0 x 143.0 cm

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed, dated and inscribed on the reverse

**PROVENANCE**

Acquired directly from the artist; Dominique Lévy Gallery, New York; ARCHEUS / POST-MODERN, London; Private collection, California and New York

**LITERATURE**

This work will be included in the forthcoming volume V of "Soulages, L'œuvre Complet, Peintures" currently in preparation

**EXHIBITED**

"Soulages at 100", ARCHEUS / POST-MODERN at the Armory Show, New York, 4-8 March 2020, n° I5

**NOTES**

This work is not for sale

**REFERENCE**

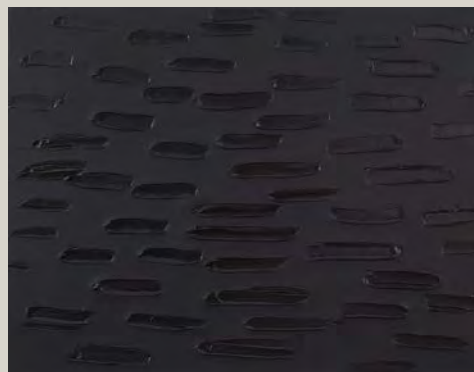
CCI6-I3







Peinture 130 x 165 cm, 2 décembre 2017



**16**

**TITLE**

Peinture 130 x 165 cm, 2 décembre 2017

**MEDIUM**

Acrylic on canvas

**DATE**

2017

**SIZE**

51 1/4 x 65 in : 130.0 x 165.0 cm

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed, dated and titled on the reverse

**PROVENANCE**

Acquired directly from the artist;  
Lévy Gorvy, New York

**LITERATURE**

This work will be included in the  
forthcoming volume V of "Soulages, L'œuvre  
Complet, Peintures" currently in preparation

**EXHIBITED**

Lévy Gorvy, Pierre Soulages: A Century,  
5th September-26th October 2019, New  
York; "Soulages at 100", ARCHEUS / POST-  
MODERN at the Armory Show, New York,  
4-8 March 2020, n°16

**REFERENCE**

A19-31



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