

INTERVIEW JEAN-PIERRE SERGENT WITH THIERRY SAVATIER | THE EROTIC ART OF JPS | 3 PARTS | BESANÇON FINE ARTS & ARCHEOLOGY MUSEUM | SEPTEMBER 19 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

The artist Jean-Pierre Sergent and Art Historian Thierry Savatier, world specialist of Gustave Courbet, are exchanging about some erotical works of art of the artist realized since his New York years (1993-2003) until nowadays, during his exhibition: "The 4 pillars of the sky". Filmed by Lionel Georges, Louise Prevel and Lea Bruckert in the Conference Room of the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Besançon on September 19, 2020. Transcriptions by Karine Joyerot.

PART 1 | [SEE THE VIDEO](#)

Jean-Pierre Sergent: Dear Thierry, it's always a great pleasure to record our interviews, we've already have done at least three or four.

Thierry Savatier: Yes!

JPS: So I wanted firstly present you some of my erotic works, and you also wanted to talk about the large scale format... So I am going to present a few large-format works, so that the public understands where I come from and how I started to develop this work, which is a bit organic somewhere, you see! So we're going to project visuals... Some large murals installations! And I wanted to quote Jack Kerouac, who's an author I love, and of course those American writers who wrote in the 50s and 60s in the United States, where there was a huge social upheaval going on, that is to say, what we can call the disappearance of spirituality. And Kerouac went on the road and they found a little bit of spirituality thanks to Japanese Zen Buddhism masters. He quotes in particular from D.T.'s beautiful book. Suzuki and in his book (The Dharma Bums) where he talks about emptiness, he talks about the Ryoanji garden in Kyoto, and that will explain a little bit how I develop the structure of my work somehow: About the Ryoanji Garden in Kyoto: "The shape of the garden responds to a mysterious order. Only the form can allow us to understand what emptiness is." Because emptiness is also one of the big metaphysical issue in my work, which is not systematically evoked by the Void but by its opposite the Full somewhere and I think it's important to talk about it. So, at the very beginning, the first works on Plexiglas in New York were created like that, they were assemblages of panels and adjusted all together these panels created a square, and that created a dynamic in the painting that I wanted to keep afterwards by always surrounding my paintings with a "sacred frame" composed of alternative checkerboard rectangles. Here we see how today, I frame my paintings, in the center my paintings are always 1m05, and that's what we see here in the large wall installation, these are modules that I assemble like this, that's about it. And so this is the first big wall I did in New

York with 18 paintings and it just so happens that it was in my studio in Brooklyn on Jay Street and it just so happens that today the installation I have in my Besançon Studio is exactly the same size as this one! So I am continuing with that large size format and my body feels comfortable with it. Here, it was an exhibition in Brooklyn as well. At that time, I wasn't working on large Plexiglas panels, but they were 17 cm x 35 cm, gathered like this and I like to do this kind of assembling and mixing part of paintings, because for me, a work of art is not monolithic, it's composed of different cultures, we see here things of 'primitive' culture, erotic and sexual rituals, of regeneration... Here is the exhibition I currently have in Châteauvillain, the installation is titled "Cosmic Mechanics of Sexual Ecstasies" and is sized: 8m40 x 3m15, and at the opposite of the works presented here, which are almost non-erotic in the Museum, (because we have selected works that would not disturb too much the public), the exhibition is titled: "Voluptuousness"! So there, I exhibited only eroticals works.

But for me it doesn't really matter if it's erotic or not as: LIFE IS EROTICAL BY NATURE! So it doesn't really matter... That's it ! And so I want to present to the public now this installation and what I said in the introductory text of the catalog and the exhibition :

- "I want my painting and my art to be a wall-art (in French art-mur = armor), even an armor if you want, whatever, an art-architecture..." That is to say, I really want to get out of painting, "like Indian tipis", because the Indians did not paint on paintings, they painted on clothes or houses, on their tipis or their adobes... "An art-animal (like Lascaux)", since you showed it earlier in your conference with the "Scene of the well", it must be said that there was then, this science, this knowledge and this intimacy with the animal that we have lost, that contemporary man has obviously lost. "A tree-art, a river-art, a void-art." We talked about it earlier about the emptiness, "as for the Zen Buddhist monks). An art-nature, an art-sex, an art-death (like into the Egyptian tombs)"! The Egyptians impress me a lot, because all their Art is made for... To accompany the dead in its afterlife soul's wanderings. And this is an art that is really powerful, because defying death, it's kind of risky somewhere! One must have a lot of courage and willpower in order to do it! "An art-pleasure (in the Dionysian meaning), an art-presence, an art-soul, an art-joy as in the books of Jean Giono." I am very impressed by Jean Giono's books, I like his will to bring man out of his torpor and contemporary despair, and "An art-body as in sexuality." It's a bit of a play on words (art-corps pronounce as hardcore in French), but a art-body definitely incarnated! Now Thierry, would you like to speak?

TS: Yes, I would like to intervene about the panels, which perhaps you will present, which are, for example, the ones you have exhibited here.

JPS: Here they are!

TS: Yes, that's it! So what is striking, as I was saying earlier, is that there is de

facto a Jean-Pierre Sergent style that means that you can find yourself in a room where there is about 500 artworks and 1 Jean-Pierre Sergent, there will be no doubt about it, you will recognize it right away and at first glance! And there are different aspects that seem interesting to me in this work and there I would say first of all from a formal point of view, not to mention the thematic, but from a simple formal point of view. Firstly of all it is this question raised just now by Jean-Pierre Sergent of the void, its works, at least on Plexiglas, it is less obvious in his works on paper. Its paintings on Plexiglas, it is some void into the anti-void in fact, because not only all the space is occupied by the graphics, by the colors but, it is occupied, without us really consciously realizing it, in three dimensions, since the technique he uses, which is the silkscreening technique, it is a superimposition of layers so what we can see here, and when we are in front of the installation, when we are looking at one of the works, it is necessary to adapt our glance. First you're going to see something that may seem highly aesthetic and at the same time may seem confused; and then you're going to concentrate on the work and little by little, the eye is going to get used to it, as one gets used to the darkness or to the light. The eye is going to get used to it and you're going to see the different layers that will appear, one after the other, and that's really quite amazing because there's no place for emptiness, but the place given to color and given to graphics, it's a place that literally is in three dimensions. There is a second idea that I find very interesting in Jean-Pierre Sergent's work, which is modularity, that is to say that we start from a format that is always and ever the same (105 x 105 cm), which is a square, and we can create a work that will make: 5 meters, 8 meters, 20 meters, infinity... We can cover an entire wall with the works and with, as everything is modular, with an infinite possibility of representations. You just have to take a panel and then change it, put it somewhere else etcetera... and you will have an infinite possibility of representations!

This is really something very astonishing and then it must be said; we see it in art from the seventeenth, eighteenth, even more so in the nineteenth and in a certain way in the twentieth century too, what distinguishes the good artist from the great artist; first of all it is the way of representing the nudes, this is especially the case in the nineteenth century, but it is also the possibility of dealing with large scales paintings, look at Courbet: "Un enterrement à Ornans" or "L'Atelier du peintre", they are colossal formats. And it is also found in the 20th century, let's have a look also at "Guernica", which is one of the paintings that marked me the most in my life when I saw it in the Reina Sofía Museum in Madrid, "Guernica" its, I quote from memory: 5 m x 7 m... It's colossal, you are captivated by a work like that and I think that the large format is also what separates also the great artist from the good artist. We see it with Jackson Pollock too, I mean, there are Pollock's canvases that are huge, that's about the large format! One must have courage and strength to complete large format, it's far from being obvious, very far from being obvious. And thanks to this modularity, with Jean-Pierre Sergent's work, we can achieve large format, I almost can say limitless... since we can always add new panels

to the existing ones.

JPS: Yes thank you Thierry. Yes it's true it's one of my main preoccupations, it's to get out of the limit of the body but it's transcendence, we can evoke transcendence. It's really one of the subjects that is close to my heart, I want to reach transcendence but through my body and not through intellectual subterfuges, that's very, very important. Here I'm going to evoke, I don't want to justify myself, as an artist never has to justify for his work, we do what we want even if we have to pay a high price. It just so happens that in New York from 1993, I picked up erotic images in the press. Here are the first erotic silkscreens on paper and Plexiglas in New York (1994-1996). I wanted to quote here an extract from Anselm Kiefer, which illustrates what you explained so perfectly earlier in your lecture.

"Ethics doesn't exist in Art, because ethics and morality are always linked to time, morality always changes, so an artist can't have morality because otherwise its frozen in contemporary time!"

And this is a sentence that is important and that you have to think about when you see a work of art. We are always the germinations of our time but also the fruit of the history of mankind, so when you are in front of a work of art and it shocks you, well as we say in New York 'Don't take it personal!' That is to say that the work was not necessarily made for you, and be humble in front of a work of art too, instead of rejecting it, try to see it with your heart more than with your reason (or your artistic culture), I think it's important! So at the time I used to buy the New York Times and of course I used to screenprint images that I found in this New York Times onto this New York Times... That's a bit my "New York Times Series"! Here, it's this work that we see exhibited here: "Adam, Eve & the Graffiti", that I exhibited at the Remiremont Museum last year and I find that all religions are just too restrictive toward sex... because this is in the church's portico of Notre-Dame de Paris, it's Adam and Eve who are wearing sex caches of course, you can't really have sex with sex caches (vine leaves), of course, it doesn't exist... it's an allucination! And so, I just draw a big cock like this and I printed it, and behind this big cock, there's also a Japanese erotic drawing. The Japanese people, I'll come back to that later, have a slightly different access to sexuality than we do. And then this is one of the first print of an erotic series of 1998 and I retrieved the image directly... it was at that time when I started using a computer, so you can find pornographic images easily on the internet and I reworked these pornographic images to make them iconic somehow. So I will show you a couple of visuals and then we'll talk about that series of work with Thierry afterwards. It's a work entitled "Duality" and it's done on Serishi paper which is extremely thick, I bought it in Los Angeles into a mall galleries center and I made this series a little precious where there are just only two colors. It's an obvious incitement to sexuality. This work can make us think of Matisse, about whom we talked a lot with Nicolas Surlapierre (Director of the Museum), who is here, during our last video interview. Perhaps you wanted to talk about it?

TS: Yes, of course, on this source of erotic inspiration, one have to take it very seriously, I mean sometimes one can look at an artist's work, which, because it's of an erotic inspiration, will seem like not so serious, or even a decorative painting, well... Whereas in fact in Jean-Pierre Sergent's approach when you look at a lot of his works, when you read his writings, because it's important; he also writes and the fact that he writes by explaining his work, and the fact that he writes by explaining his work and being understandable, I insist! Because many artists are writing about their work but they could be abstract because their writings are abstract or at least abstruse. Jean-Pierre writes texts that explain his approach in an understandable way. And we can see that we are very far from the hanky panky. This is what Baudelaire said when he spoke about morals for the jackanapes, he is not a jackanapes. He would not be happy if I said he is a genius, to use Baudelaire's term, but he is not a rascal, is he? And so we must take this very seriously, the eroticism that we find in Jean-Pierre Sergent's works, he draws his inspiration from very distant times, that is to say that he will draw it from Pre-Columbian Art, from Egyptian Art, from Indian Art and also from contemporary Japanese manga, that is to say that we have here very old sources, sources of primitive art and then sources that are extremely modern because Japanese manga is extremely contemporary all the same. And he's going to collect all of that, he's going to assemble them and he's going to find... And that's something that is rare, because it's not easy, he's going to find a way to bring them into harmony, that is to say that we're going to find as well on a work: a Japanese manga with a graphic design that comes from Pre-Columbian art or Indian art and so on. And it won't seem incongruous, that is to say that he manages to find a harmony between graphics that might not at first seem to us to be able to co-exist... to be able to juxtapose each other, etcetera. I find that extremely interesting.

JPS: Yes, the artist is the one who can connect, in the religious sense of the word. That is to say, we connect dissimilar, disparate and anachronistic things... Yes, I think it's really important and essential for me to do that.

PART 2 | [SEE THE VIDEO](#)

JPS: This is the continuation of the "Duality" series (1999). I started to work a little on bondage images, I will explain it a little later, but it is a superb work, I had shown it... It's a small edition of 6 I believe, and I had sold one to a brain researcher (Neurobiologist) in New York, a Swiss German who had a crush on it and I'm glad I sold it to this friend. One have to understand that artists are very happy when they sell their works of art, it's quite rare, because you pass a baton somehow, that is to say that people appropriate something from you and it gives them joy and pleasure... That's absolutely it. So now, I want to talk about Marquis de Sade, you evoked him a little bit earlier so I'm going to read his text by and the public can read it too. It's hilarious and it's totally awesome. So it's a quotation from the "The 120 Days of Sodom":
(Everything is organized in his delirium, it's really very structured.)

"On September 30th. He fucks a turkey whose head is squeezed between the thighs of a girl lying on his stomach, so it looks like he's fucking the girl. He is fucked during this time, and at the moment of his discharge, the girl cuts the turkey's neck.

(It's strong there, if you don't laugh it's because you didn't understand anything!)

On the 31st. He fucks a goat doggy-style, while he's being whipped. He makes a child with this goat, which in turn to fuck later, whatever it is a monster.

(Then there, we laugh a lot because it is absolute delirium!)

On the 32nd. He fucks goats. (It's fabulous.)

On the 33rd. He wants to see a woman coming, jerked off by a dog; and he kills the dog with a pistol shot on the woman's belly without hurting the woman. (You have to dare to do that!)

On the 34th. He fucks a swan, putting a host in its ass, and he strangles the animal himself while ejaculating. That same evening, the bishop fucks Cupid in his ass for the first time."

It must be said that we are, you like me and the French people; we have been really lucky to have great philosophers, who have thought about sexuality and who have tried to get out of the stupidity imposed by taboos, imposed by religions, in order to reveal the desire present in Nature. That is to say that Nature has no morals somewhere and everything happens in there. It is also an apology of the imagination because in order to write this kind of text out, you must have a really fertile imagination! So I'm going to show you this work that I did afterwards with Sade. So there we see in the background, Sade text's. It is important to say that it is a work that I never showed. Here, there is also what is named an axis mundi which comes from Maya culture, and of course it is exactly the same thing: that is to say that they sacrificed human beings to the Sun, they wanted to regenerate the World, they wanted to reenter the Cosmos and belonging to Life! And so all my work is talking about that. Here it's a little bit hot and trashy and when a gallery owner in New York (Eric Allouche) came at the Studio to choose some works for a collective exhibition, he saw this, he told me: "Jean-Pierre, if Matisse had been alive today, he would have painted something like this, but I don't think we'll be able to show it in our gallery." Because the owners were of Jewish origin, on the opening night, there were rabbis blessing the paintings, so I could have hardly imagined the rabbis blessing my painting like that, we had therefore chosen other more saleable paintings! But it's a work that speaks to me very deeply and I think it's also particularly very, very beautiful. There are 2 versions in this series and I would love to show them some day in an exhibition.

TS: Yes, it's true that the reaction, not of the public itself, but of the gallery owners, is always very interesting as soon as a work can seem either erotic or simply challenging. I have two examples that I will tell you very quickly because they are quite funny, and they concern Picasso. The first example is a work, from memory of the 1930s, which is a nice nude, seen from the back, it's a portrait of Marie-Thérèse, and where the anus is represented by a black dot,

and Picasso shows this work to Rosenberg, who was his gallery owner at the time, and Rosenberg is absolutely appalled and says: "I don't want to show any asshole in my gallery!" So, well then! Many years later, it was in the years 65-66, and this was told to me by Roland Dumas (Picasso's French lawyer) when we were writing our book together about Picasso, because he witnessed this, Picasso shows Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, who was his gallery owner, "Woman Pissing" which is today at the Pompidou Centre, and when he shows this to Kahnweiler, Kahnweiler says, "But it's going to be very difficult to sell it, I can't buy it". And then Picasso's reaction was very simple, he just said: "Yes, they will probably understand it in 30 or 50 years!" I mean, he didn't care, he painted that because he wanted to paint it. But we see this resistance from the gallery owners, which is not necessarily commercial resistance, only purely commercial, but which is also moral resistance in a certain way.

JPS: Yes.

TS: In Rosenberg's case it's clear, because I mean this painting is absolutely splendid, it is at the Picasso Museum in Paris today, but Rosenberg didn't even consider showing it, whereas in his Gallery he had a special floor for the Impressionists, the School of Paris, that could satisfy its traditional customers, classic, and then above that there were the cubists, there was Picasso and the others, and there he would only bring up those he knew wouldn't be shocked by what they would see, but even that ("the Woman Pissing") he didn't want it... So you can imagine the reaction he might have had to the painting you just showed us!

JPS: Yes, of course! So this is another Plexiglas with a scene, it's a little bit inspired by India where there are all these erotic scenes, unfortunately enough, I've never had a chance to travel to India but their works impress me particularly deeply. So it's a Plexiglas that is presented actually at the "Voluptuousness" exhibition in Châteauevillain. And this, I chose this one because it is a large paper which is there, you have the chance to have a part of this big painting because when I print on Plexiglas the panels are 1.05 by 52, 50 m and I always print a large format and a smaller format on what I name the "Half Papers". And so I had showed this work at an Art Fair in Montreux and a lady who was eating there, because on the opening night, there were people eating in front of this painting and there was a lady who complained because there was this big dick hanging in front of her while she was eating. That's artist life's, it makes me rather laugh, but I think that despite everything it's a magnificent work because you can also see the Inferno that we talked about earlier, a manuscript from the Middle Ages, you can see a Pygmy work, you can see 'Silentium est' (it's silence), it's also a manuscript from the Middle Ages... Here, it's an angel that I found, you see the man there, it's an angel I found in the street in New York, on a background of the stock market, I'm mixing, not magically because I don't like that word too much, but I'm mixing the unconscious, the chance with the need or disdain for our economical

systems somewhere, and then there's this woman I drew with the sex well notified, as you mentioned earlier, with pubic hair, vulva and clitoris, so it's all there! And then, on the top right, it's an musician Egyptian luth player, the gesture is so erotic that I liked it, there you go.

T.S: This little fellow you're talking about, by the way, so that's the great flaw of art historians, is that they spend their time seeing one work of thinking about other works and trying to build bridges, but it's still quite close to some of Braque's "Birds".

JPS: Yes you're right! But, it's just a little angel on gold paper that a kid had cut out (with round-tipped scissors) and that I found on the sidewalk and that's how it was done, that's what we tell, we tell about our aesthetic or human encounters, on the sidewalk and that's how it was done. That's stories we tell about: our aesthetic or human encounters, of course that's our mission for us artists... That's it. So now I'm going to focus on the bondage series and we are lucky to have two works from this series here, so I'm going to explain a little bit what I often explain so that the European public could better understands it: In Japan they connect and knot ropes like this on trees or stones to sanctify them somehow, that is to say that they define a sacred circle and one decides that there is a Kami spirit living in this tree and so people will gather, perhaps they invoke their dead, perhaps they want to be present in a specific place, so we can talk about spirituality.

That's what really interests me in bondage images, so there we see a Japanese bondage in that picture and I probably drew a drawing from it, I don't remember which one, so they name it *Shibari* (tied, bound) or *Kimbaku-bi* (magnificent bondage) and we can discuss endlessly about the relationship of the woman's body towards suffering or pleasure, but nevertheless, when we see that, we see more of an ecstasy than a suffering, and that's what I want to show very exactly in my work, that is to say, the moment when the body loses itself to precisely enter into ecstatic state... So I started this bondage series (Bondage & Freedom) in New York in 2003, just before leaving New York, and so here is a Japanese bondage image, and there you see a little drawing that runs through the surface, as one could say, surrounding the image, they are obviously prehistorical vulvas, so I drew them into the background. Here we see this work that is here, and the phallic drawing is a drawing that comes from the Asmats of New Guinea and the background is a drawing that comes from a Japanese kimono drawing. This is to explain a little bit my art work. And here we had printed with the Gallery Le Pavé dans la Mare, which was a Besançon's gallery about ten years ago, we printed onto a factory this large sized bondage, that I had exhibited at the Museum of Fine Arts in Mulhouse and that I am currently showing in its paper version. Here is the Large Blue Nude, and to tell a little anecdote it is thanks to this large format that I get the chance to met my friend philosopher Marie-Madeleine Varet... Here it is, I don't know if you want to talk a little bit about these bondage series.

TS: Yes, but it's interesting because there is indeed between the European and the Japanese vision of bondage, a very big difference, that is to say that there is a spiritual dimension of bondage in Japan that we don't find in Europe, and then what is also quite interesting when you represent scenes... finally works based on bondage scenes, it's that they represent only women bodies, but bondage is of course also suitable for men, you just have to read, we were talking about Sade earlier, I'm not a big fan of Sade ; I like his revolutionary side in a certain way but I don't like his texts very much because, with Sade, the consent of the submissive is never required. As with Georges Bataille also, whom I don't like either; that's the way it is, at least I said it. But when we read other literature, I think of Jeanne de Berg or Jean de Berg since she was Robbe-Grillet's wife, we find also this bondage, but applied this time to men, and that is something that is quite absent from representations, including Japanese manga, in Japan it is always the woman who is bound, or practically always, who is represented and not the man. But what's interesting is, I think that through your works, in the viewer's eyes, you really ask a question because, a work of art, with all the conception that we have in the West of the work of art: that is, it's still "sacred". A work of art that represents some bondage, that is to say the 'spiritual dimension' as Japan conceives it, it still poses a problem in the glance of the Western spectator, who does not assume that there is a spiritual dimension in... the practice and the technique and the complexity of the technique of bondage.

JPS: Yes, but someone who doesn't have spirituality cannot understand a spiritual work, I'm deeply sorry to say that, but it's an obvious fact, a blatant truth. Today, 90% of the French population is atheist, you understand, where to find (or rediscover) our spirituality! It's a huge and real question of survival?

T.S: So this is a question that Jean-Pierre raises often and that I find personally fascinating, which is to say atheists people do not have a true spirituality in fact and there I admit that I have a lot of difficulty to adhere to this idea. I even go, so it is a provocation of course, but I will even tell you that the last place where one can find spirituality, it is into religions, and particularly in monotheisms, so why? Because when you look at how a religion is structured, I'll take the case of the Catholic Church for example, but I might as well take Islam. It's a power struggle, it's market shares, I like to make a comparison like that, but it's market shares, which one take or don't take, it's power struggles and it's money! And one day when we were having lunch together with Roland Dumas, I told him that, I said that for me, the last place to find spirituality is religion, because it is a question of power, it is a question of money, all the scandals of the Vatican's finances since Paul VI until today, it is still huge, it is always some questions of money. And you go into Islam and you find imams who make huge personal fortunes for themselves during the exercise of their duties, but I mean that's very well known, so where's the spirituality in that imbroglio? Question mark?

JPS: Yes, yes.

T.S: And finally, with Roland Dumas, we talked about it a lot and we came to a common conclusion, that is to say, ultimately that spirituality, one like the other, we find it in the works of art. That is to say, spirituality we find it in Art and absolutely not in Religions, and I think that a convinced atheist will find spirituality somewhere.

JPS: Yes, yes, for sure.

TS: Because spirituality can be a vertical relationship but not necessarily with an imaginary entity or whatever...

JPS: Yes, of course.

TS: One can have this vertical relationship with a work of art that inspires us and transports us.

JPS: Yes, but if it has spirituality at the first place, you can't find spirituality in an art work that doesn't have some.

TS: Yes, of course.

JPS: So where can you find it? Where is the starting point, the inspiration?

TS: Yes, it's true, it's true that when we were discussing this, we were talking about Giacometti's works, so yes, there is spirituality there.

JPS: Yes, yes!

TS : So yes, there is spirituality there.

PART 3 | [SEE THE VIDEO](#)

JPS : Yes, I wanted to talk about my current work, with some visuals from the "Shakti-Yoni" series on which I have been working since 2016. I really like this series because there are really no taboos, and I wanted to make some quotes to explain a little bit its title, so it's named: "Shakti-Yoni, Ecstatic Cosmic Dances". "Shakti, is in Hinduism the divine feminine energy, and the consort of Shiva."(Wikipedia) and "The Goddess to the Absolute, of which all female deities are only aspects..." (Alexandra David-Néel) According to her book that I am currently reading, in her *In the Heart of the Himalayas, the Nepal*, and she really embodies (this Shakti) this universal feminine form, which is the absolute mother goddess! Whose image and presence has been lost in Europe, in the West, and : "The Yoni in Hinduism, designates the female genital organ (womb or vulva); it is the symbol of the feminine energy called Shakti." "It is the sexual

enjoyment which is the substance of the world. It is what brings us closer to the divine state." Says Alain Daniélou who is a very famous Hinduist whose writings I love, and the second sentence I would like to quote is: "Ecstasy is cooperating to the divine creation of the world." It's in Henri Michaux's, *L'infini* turbulent, and so I'm going to pass you some visuals, there are very few. I also wanted to quote again this 'friend', finally in quotation marks, Alexandra David-Neel who says in her book's about:

FREEDOM - SUBMISSION - EQUALITY

"Passang is Tibetan, he despises the Hindus and their religious beliefs. He himself has a brain full of the most grotesque superstitions, but that doesn't stop him from mocking the superstitions of others. We are all at the same point".

That is to say that it shows well as in our discussions, to be atheist, to be religious, that is to say that we all tinker around a bit with our own poor beliefs and what I try to really do, in a very strong way in my work, it's to shake up and push these boundaries that we have in our minds to go a little further, that is what I hope at least. And we discussed it earlier during lunch: if you see a work like this you will all immediately (in France) think of: "The Origin of the World" I had some flyers printed where there was a woman's sex, and I was told : Oh "The Origin of the World"! That is to say that in France, as soon as you see a woman's sex: it's Courbet's 'L'Origine du monde', but it's never the sex of their girlfriends, it's never its own sex, it's never the sex of your mother or your sister. So we are still conditioned, Art and image condition us somewhere, we all have only that in mind "The Origin of the World"! It's great for Courbet but it's just of some kind of a woman sex. We may talk about it later, that's it! And here, I worked with a drawing by Hildegarde von Bingen, with these sort of cosmic concentric circles. And what is important is to understand that consciousness is something that evolves ! And Art too, it's somewhere present to make us evolve at the higher consciousness level, to become aware of something; and let's say that the work of art is this central point, the axis, in the middle of the painting and that afterwards our consciousness evolves and it encompasses the world little by little. And it's very important, for me, it's very important to try to develop that way of working and of thinking. Here is the last visual, it's an erotic work too, I don't know if you want to intervene, we're coming to the end of this presentation Thierry.

TS: There is a notion, which it is true, that we don't talk much about in Art, which is that of pleasure, and which seems important to me, both the pleasure of looking at a work, and probably also the pleasure that an artist takes in creating its work. So the pleasure of looking at a work is something, I would say that concerns the spectator, it's something that is variable geometry, you can have the pleasure of looking at a work and then your brother, your sister or even twins, will not share this pleasure at all, so it's really something very subjective. But what would interest me is to see the other side of things: not that of the spectator whom I know a little bit, but that of the artist... And what pleasure does the artist take when he creates?

JPS: Yes, well already, I take pleasure in all the stages of creation, already, when I recover an image that appeals to me, I don't know why it appeals to me? Why this image appealed to me more than another? I have pleasure in reworking it on the computer, I have pleasure in choosing the color. For me, yes, all is joy in the working process. Yes, it is a state of joy, one can't say that it is a permanent joy, because there are part of this work that are quite laborious, but it is a state of joy and presence, of being in the world. It is a bit of a great prayer somewhere, even though I am an atheist, as we talked about earlier, but it is a great prayer to the world and it is a great offering to the world too!

TS: Yes, it's an interesting question because what struck me, as I said earlier, is that I've known Jean-Pierre since 2006, every time I come to the region I visit him, I look at his works in his studio, etcetera, etcetera, and what struck me a lot is that he's someone who works all the time! That is to say, for example, during the last lockdown in which we were all at stuck at home... We couldn't do much, we couldn't exhibit, we couldn't do anything, anyway, so I would phone Jean-Pierre and he would say, "I'm working. "

I think it's wonderful as the conditions weren't really the most favorable to work, that's the least we can say. So, there is certainly, yes, this pleasure of working, which animates a certain number of artists, who really spend their time working, well, Magritte for example, you can't imagine that when one see his works, but Magritte had organized his work as an administrative civil servant; that is to say that he left home to his studio at fixed hours, he came back for lunch, he left in the afternoon to work at fixed hours and he came back in the evening at fixed hours. You can't imagine that when you see his works, but there you go, but it was constant work, besides that there were other painters who worked in a much more impulsive way, for a certain time they worked and then they stopped working, and then there are exceptions like Picasso who worked all the time, including at night. But that's what struck me a lot, this constancy in your work, even in periods like the ones we've known and which were not the most favorable.

JPS: Yes, but working for me is a strength and it's an energy too. We talked about a Shakti energy, it's really an energy of course... Yes it's important. And this desire and this joy of living is really fundamental, and when I see some of my contemporaries fellows, who are complaining all the time, I'm completely flabbergasted that they don't understand this joy of living somewhere, it's a total waste of time, and this also inducing an emotional loss too, people who are not joyful don't attract anybody, that's it. Did you want to come back to some topics or do you want us to conclude? I just had one sentence, maybe you can conclude on that, I saw a movie the other day on Arte (cultural Channel) which was quite beautiful, it's a film named: "Ichi, The Samurai Woman" by Fumihiko Sori, and so it's a blind young and beautiful samurai woman, it was set in 18th century Japan of the samurai, she says at one point this rather moving little sentence, she says: "Any being deprived of heat ends

up dying of cold!" Well, that's absolutely what Art is about (it's warms us all); if you were ever deprived of Art, you will freeze to death too! So have a little more respect for the living artists, thank you.

TS: I think that's a nice conclusion, I have nothing to add!

JPS: Thank you Thierry. Thank you all for the cameras. Thanks to Nicolas Surlapierre (Museum Director). Good day to all of you. Thank you!