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Cover
Mœbius, Arzak le rocher, 1995, gouache and acrylics on paper, 14.2 x 9.6 in. © 2020 Mœbius Production
PRESS RELEASE

»MOEBIUS« – SURREAL COMICWORLDS
Exhibition at Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR
15 September 2019 until 29 March 2020

The Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR is showing an exhibition of visionary worlds by the eminent French comics illustrator and scenarist Jean Giraud (1938 – 2012), who attained international fame under the name Mœbius. Mœbius explored the spheres of dreams and science fiction and inspired films by George Lucas, Ridley Scott or Hayao Miyazaki with his design of an archaic-looking future. In his stories, utopian architecture and futuristic, mega-metropolitan cities meet desert landscapes and shammanistic travels through space and time.

Mœbius blurs the boundaries between the genres of comic strips and art. With his immense power of imagination, he created a constant flow of surreal worlds with his precisely placed lines. For decades he created iconic figures like the warrior Arzak, Major Grubert or the space travelers Stell and Atan. Together with them he also sends the viewers on adventure trips into the infinite worlds of his imagination.

The exhibition with approximately 450 works is devoted to Mœbius’s extensive œuvre and his picture stories: Beginning with his notebooks (“carnets”), in which he concentrated the fundamental ideas of his image production, and continuing via the scenically structured series of comics, sketched drawings, abstract paintings, up to his popular printed graphics, the spectrum of his art of drawing is spread out before our eyes.

This exhibition of the work of Mœbius is the result of an exclusive collaboration with Mœbius Production.

INFO SERVICE:
Opening Hours:
Tuesday – Sunday: 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.
as well as 3 Oct., 1 Nov., 26 Dec.
Closed: Monday as well as 24 Dec., 25 Dec., 31 Dec.,
1 Jan. 2020

Admission Fees:
Adults 10,50 € | reduced rates 6,50 €
Children / teenagers up to 18 years: Free admission
Recipients of LVR benefits (incl. one accompanying person): Free admission

Further information:
WWW.MAXERNSTMUSEUM.LVR.DE
BIOGRAPHY

Biography Jean Henri Gaston Giraud alias Gir & Mœbius

1938  Born in Nogent-sur-Marne.
1942  Grows up in Gontenay-sous-Bois with his grandparents.
1954  His father introduces him to science fiction by showing him the first issues of the French magazine Fiction. Starts training at the École Supérieure des Arts Appliqués Duperré.
1955  First trip to Mexico.
1956  First publication in Far West magazine, contributes to Fripounet et Marisette, Coeur Vaillants...
1958  Starts 27 months of military service in Germany and Algeria, illustrations for the army magazine 5/5 Forces Françaises.
1960  Stories for the magazine Bonux-Boy, alongside Joseph Gillain aka Jijé, Roba, Peyo...
1973  La Déviation [The Detour] [Pilote magazine] opens up new leads.
BIOGRAPHY

1981  Grand Prix at the Angoulême festival.
1982  Contributes to Steven Lisberger’s Tron, the first film with computer graphics. Animation movie Les Maîtres du temps [Time Masters] with René Laloux.
1983  Moves his studio to Tahiti.
1984  Moves to Los Angeles. First meets Isabelle Champeval in Venice, Italy, with whom he will have to more children, Raphaël (1989) and Nausicaä (1995).
1985  An advertising project for Citroën leads to the series Le Monde d’Edena [The World of Edena]. In Tokyo, he works on sets and costumes for the animation movie Little Nemo. 
1986  Founds the publishing company Starwatcher Graphics in Los Angeles in late 1986. Marvel translates his work in the USA.
1987  Costumes for Ron Howard’s Willow. Study for James Cameron’s Abyss.
1989  Death of Jean-Michel Charlier during the development of the Blueberry album Arizona Love.
1990  La Déesse [The Goddess] and La Planète encore [The Still Planet] (Casterman).
1991  Continues writing Marshall Blueberry, one album of which is drawn by William Vance and Michel Rouge. Silkscreens, printed images, and deluxe limited editions (Stardom). Pilot for Starwatcher, the first film made entirely with computer graphics.
1995  Marries Isabelle Champeval. Continues to work on the Blueberry series as writer and artist with Mister Blueberry (Dargaud). Writer for Little Nemo with Bruno Marchand.
BIOGRAPHY

1996 Large exhibitions in Italy. Publishes *Folles Perspectives* with *Stardom*.

1997 *Ombres sur Tombstone* [Shadows on Tombstone] [Dargaud]. Contributes to *The Fifth Element* by Luc Besson. Runs *Stardom* with Isabelle. Adapts the myth of *Icarus* for Japan with the manga series *Icare*, with Jiro Tanigushi, storyline by Mœbius [script collaborator, Jean Annestay].


1999 Publishes *40 Days dans le desert B* [40 days in the Desert B] and *Une jeunesse heureuse* [Happy Youth] with *Stardom*. Illustrates Dante’s *Divine Comedy* [Nuages edition]. Publishes *Histoire de mon double* [A Story of My Double] [Éditions no 1].

2000 Large retrospective exhibition at the *Angoulême museum*. 2001 Après Jesus Christ with Jean Luc Coudray, digital print.

2001 Founds Mœbius Production, merges with *Stardom*. *Sra, le monde d´Edena* [Sra, The World of Edena] [Casterman].

2003 Release of Jan Kounen’s film adaptation *Muraya, l’histoire secrete de Blueberry* [Blueberry]. *OK Corral* [Dargaud].


2005 Publishes *Dust*, last *Blueberry* album.

2007 Draws *La Version irlandaise* [The Irish Version], one of the endings of *Van Hamme’s XIII* series.

2008 *Le Garage Hermétique* opens as a ride at the *Futuroscope theme park*.


2011 *Le Major* [The Major] and *La Faune de Mars* [Martian Wildlife] [Mœbius Production].

2012 Jean Giraud dies on March 10 in Montrouge. In September, his monumental fresco *Le Saut de l’Ange* is inaugurated in the *Beffroi de Montrouge*. 
QUOTES

»AN ARTIST MUST SMASH DOWN THE SYSTEMS THAT DOMESTICATE THE MIND.«

MŒBIUS

Nature and Metamorphosis

“We are constantly transforming, usually in response to various stimuli, visible or invisible, internal or external, creating a movement in life, a physical and psychic change. For me, the plastic metamorphosis that runs through my drawings is not a fetish or a graphic discovery, it is the metamorphosis that happens inside us all the time.”

Spirituality and Alchemy

“One should spend the whole life discovering every facet of the own being and nature and all that it represents: fire, air, earth and water, the basic elements, but also the animalistic and emotional archetypes, and especially the physiological functional type. Likewise the more angelic structures.”

The dream of flying and falling

“The true birth of Mœbius as an established phenomenon came with Arzach. I was actually struck by the discovery of science fiction when I was very young, around the age of 14 or 15. Now, it is a spontaneous part of my vocabulary and mental heritage—a bit like the Western genre. Western and science fiction eventually blended: the universe described in Arzach very much resembles a sort of imaginary West, transposed onto a no less imaginary planet. What emerged through Arzach is a kind of character or silhouette that has become a signature of mine: a rather high Phrygian hat, conical, with ear cups and a visor. But that signature comes with a price, and I had to make sure the character kept evolving through variations, repetitions, subtle modifications: he has become very mean at times, very disturbing, very extraterrestrial, very reptilian. At others, he was very angelic. He took the posture of a Pre-Raphaelite symbol, or inherited an aesthetic from classical Greek statues. He became a man, an androgyne, a woman. The character of Arzach went through some changes over time. He even became Starwatcher for a while.”
The inner desert and its representation

“I did feel some tenderness, a strong fondness for deserts, especially for the North American desert with its very distinctive features—speckled here and there with tufts of grass at regular intervals, with cacti like motionless beings, and boulders in fantastic, almost organic forms. [...]

Wanderers between worlds

“My primary jumping-off point was 1960s science fiction and its prevailing theories on time: all revolving around the idea that time can be subdivided into different possible streams, that each moment in time creates a proliferation of possibilities. These timestreams may run dry or they may continue, though they all take place simultaneously . . . But I always saw this in a very literary, dreamlike light: as if, by dreaming, we might be able to enter tangential zones between those different times and different spaces.

Abstract forms

“One of the adventures of contemporary art is retreating into the part of oneself that hasn’t been fully sublimated by social domestication, by politeness, by the need to survive in a complex society. These small works give me very, very strong feelings when I see them because I can’t figure out what they represent. At times, they look organic, but they can be mineral; they can be concretions of basalt or semi-transparent, semi-precious stones, embedded in clay gangues, with bubbles, bulbs, snakes sometimes—though they’re not real snakes since they don’t have any scales. Rather, they’re like shapes or pipes; it’s not clear. They may be organs.”

“They are simply very arbitrary forms, a chaos of forms. And then, little by little, as elements are introduced, they arrive at an inextricable situation, and the question arises: what does it say? So, I start reuniting and closing some forms, extending others, but less in the spirit of adventure than of reorganization and justification, in order to create meaning. I do so according to an aesthetic sense that suits my tastes, of course. I’m not going to obey and follow just any school. I’m immersed in my own personal satisfaction, absolute, selfish, egotistical, total.
But always with a craft that will transform this kind of primitive soup into something rather lively for the person who will see it and tell themselves: ‘Oh, that’s weird, but still, it’s not just strange because it is well done. And you can see it is. Everything is well done. Everything is impeccable. It exactly describes the thing as it should be.’ But what it describes remains unknown. It describes something unidentifiable, but perfectly done. That’s what I love. This can be found in the work of the surrealists, on the literary level, text-wise. The great poets of that time worked in that direction. They started with an automatic process and then looked at what kind of adventure they had gotten into. They came out of the diving bell, you see, and—whoosh!—they released the butterfly. That’s a good thing.”

The Utopia of the Wonderful

“I realize that my art is a reflection of my life, and not in reverse, like it’s the case for other artists. Their life reflects their art. But I don’t want to go that way, although it can be a big temptation. It was a conscious decision, and for me a very big decision, because my life became a reflection of my art in a certain way.”

The double person

“I am a follower of controlled schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is a completely positive human condition. We begin to call it schizophrenia when it derails, when it’s no longer controlled. Then it becomes something to treat. […] Schizophrenia, that is the ability to have separate, different registers within oneself and to use them, not to manipulate, but to do what we have to do to survive in the world, this is essential.”
PRESS PHOTOS

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Press image 1 Möbius, Arzak le rocher, 1995, gouache and acrylics on paper, 14.2 x 9.6 in. © 2020 Möbius Production

Press image 2 Möbius, La chasse au mayor, 2009, acrylics on canvas, 35.4 x 51.2 in. © 2020 Möbius Production

Press image 3 Möbius, L’Homme du Ciguri, 1994, Airbrush and mixed technique on paper, 15.4 x 11.6 in. © Les Humanoides Associés/ Möbius Production
“IN DER PLASTIK ERSCHAFFE ICH EINE WAHRHAFT TRAUMHAFTE WELT LEBENDER MONSTER.”

Joan Miró

Press image 4 Mœbius, Starwatcher, 1985, Ink and watercolor on paper, no dimensions © 2020 Mœbius Production


Press image 7 Mœbius, Trait de génie: Giraud-Mœbius, 2000, Ink and watercolor on paper, 9.4 x 12.6 in. © 2020 Mœbius Production

Press image 8 Mœbius, Le Lac (Detail), 1998, Design for the interior decoration of the Sony Metreon, San Francisco, USA, Acrylic and gouache on paper, 9.1 x 36.6 in. © Sony Development/ Mœbius Production

Press image 9 Mœbius, Ayna, 1989, Page 4, Colored ink, gouache and acrylic on paper, 12.7 x 8.9 in. © 2020 Mœbius Production


Press image 12 Portrait Jean Giraud, 2012, Photo: Isabelle Giraud © 2020 Mœbius Production
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* At the so called Fantasie Labor the workshops of the educational department take place.

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MÆBIUS
15.9.2019 – 29.3.2020

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Children / teenagers up to 18 years: Free admission
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