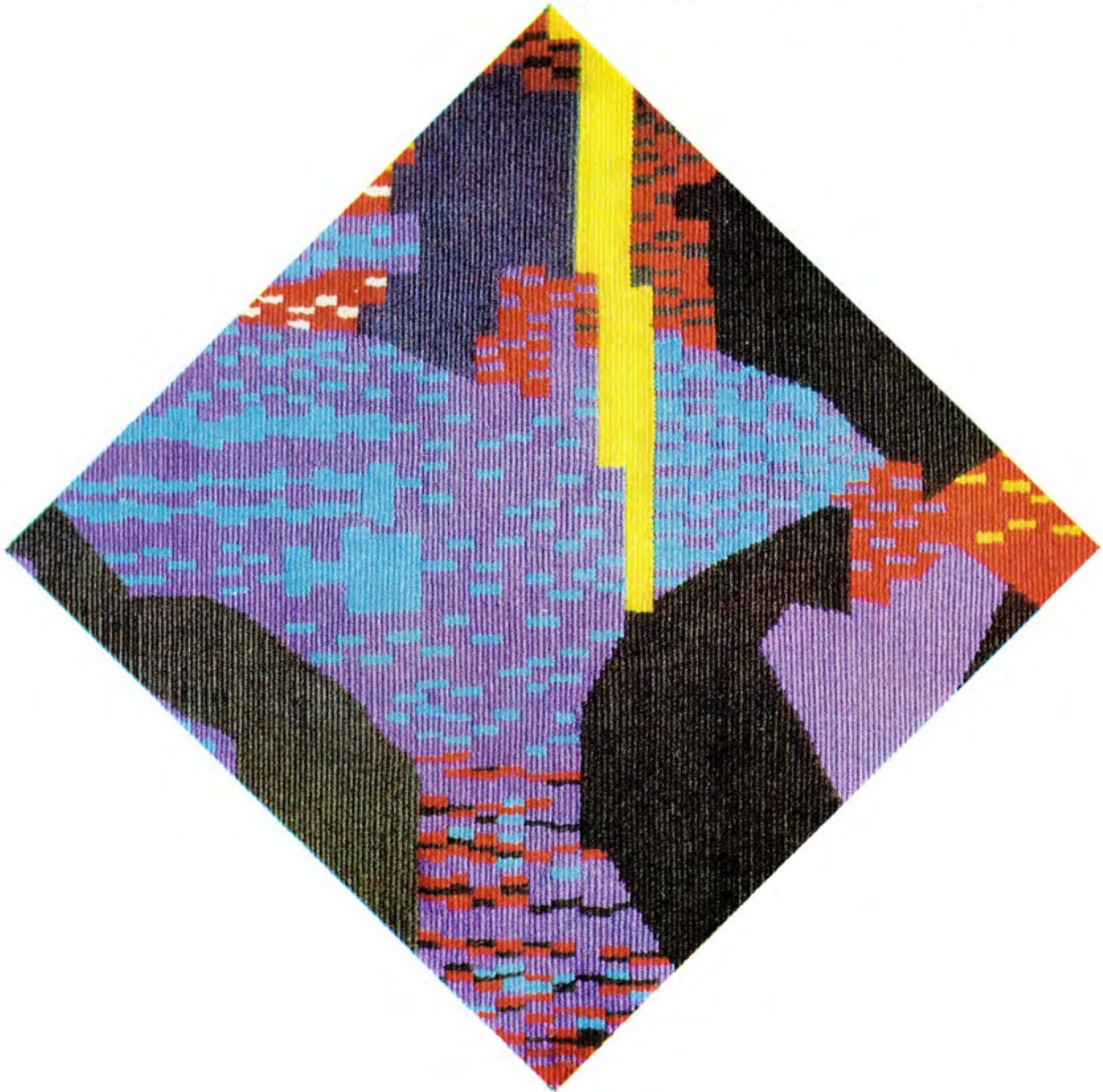


AUBUSSON TAPESTRIES





*Mathieu Mategot: Vera Cruz (Cat. No 33)*

*Cover: detail of Vera Cruz (above)*

## Aubusson Tapestries

The rough-hewn tapestries of the weaver town of Aubusson (on the banks of the river Creuse 1,200 feet up in the rocky valleys of the Marche in Central France) are the products of its regional background.

The work of the weavers of Aubusson was so dependent on peace, so "unessential" in the recurring periods of barbarism and warfare, that time and again famine stood at their door. In its 500 years of existence, tapestry weaving at Aubusson has experienced more hungry than prosperous times.

The modern revival of tapestry originated, appropriately in the town of Aubusson, when around 1920, Marius Martin, the Director of the town's school of Decorative Arts, sensed the time was ripe for a radical change in the development of this ancient craft. He advocated a limitation of the range of colours, the use of colour hatching (a special weaving process) and a return to the decorative art form.

Jean Lurcat was to spearhead what might be termed the modern school of tapestry design. Since 1916 Lurcat had been making a study of 15th century textures and it was from the craftsmen of that period that he learned the secret of balance as far as density of weave was concerned. The revival was sustained, and in 1933, new ground was broken when the principal artists of the time—Picasso, Braque, Lurcat, Derain, Dufy, Leger, Rouault and Miro—were asked to submit designs for weaving.

Six years later, in September 1939, the Ministry of National Education requested the artists Dubreuil, Gromaire and Lurcat to settle at Aubusson in order to plan, create and supervise the execution of a series of new tapestries.

In 1945, Lurcat, Saint Saens and Picart le Doux founded the Association of Tapestry Painters. The revival of tapestry as a modern art form was in full swing. Since that time the industry has grown and some full time designers have been employed at Aubusson.

Tapestry meets well with modern architecture, as indeed it has met with the architecture of the past. Wool, the very flesh and blood of tapestry, not only provides warmth and covering for

the bareness of the wall, but it also deadens noise and imparts its own special feeling of comfort and restfulness. Its chief function, however, is to illuminate man's everyday life with beauty and a kind of textured poetry.

Whatever the types of loom used over the centuries, tapestry textures have varied little. Like any other woven tissue, tapestry is composed of a warp and a weft. The warp is the skeleton structure and disappears completely beneath the body of the fabric. All that can be seen in a finished tapestry is the weft made up of the different coloured threads forming the decorative scheme. However, the weft threads are not taken systematically right across the width of the warp, as in other tissues, but only across that part of the warp corresponding to the coloured area indicated in the section of the cartoon being woven. In other words tapestries are woven in patches and several rows of the same colour are woven consecutively.

By virtue of its manual technique and basic independence of any purely mechanical aid, tapestry fulfills all the conditions required for the production of an original work of art. It is born of the collaboration between the artist who creates the cartoon and the weaver who translates the cartoon into textile matter.

The French section of this exhibition has been sponsored by the Cultural Service of the French Embassy in Canberra. The majority of these tapestries were designed by Mathieu Mategot, a principal designer of Aubusson. Others are by Rene Fumeron and Maurice Andre. Mategot has already made for himself a link with Australia, having been commissioned to design tapestries for the new National Library in Canberra.

The Australian designs by Carl Plate, Rollin Schlicht and John Coburn are the results of a competition for tapestry designs, conducted in Sydney last year. The competition was jointly sponsored by The French Embassy, Aubusson Tapestries, the Australian Wool Board and Mr. Kym Bonython. It is interesting to note that all tapestries made at Aubusson are woven exclusively from Australian Wool.

This exhibition was arranged for the Fifth Adelaide Festival of Arts and for showing later in other State Galleries.

*From notes supplied by Aubusson Tapestries Adelaide '68*

## TAPESTRIES

*All measurements are in inches, height preceding width*

### Maurice Andre

Born Paris 1914. Followed several different occupations before devoting himself to painting. Became interested in tapestry during a wartime stay in Aubusson. He organized direct collaboration between artists and tapestry workers and founded "La Tapisserie de France". He has

taken part in all of the large exhibitions of the Association of Tapestry Cartoon Painters in France and abroad. In 1964 he created two monumental tapestries for the new Casino at Cannes.

**1**  
**Comete**  
59 x 102¾

**2**  
**Labyrinthe**  
63 x 55½

### Rene Fumeron

Born in Payroux (Vienna) 1921. Worked in the School of Applied Industrial Arts and in the National School of Fine Arts. In 1945 he became interested in mural art and the problems of tapestry making and since then has devoted himself to this work. More than 700 tapestries have been completed to his designs. He has made many designs on commission from the French Government.

**3**  
**Sideral** (illustrated)  
59 x 98½

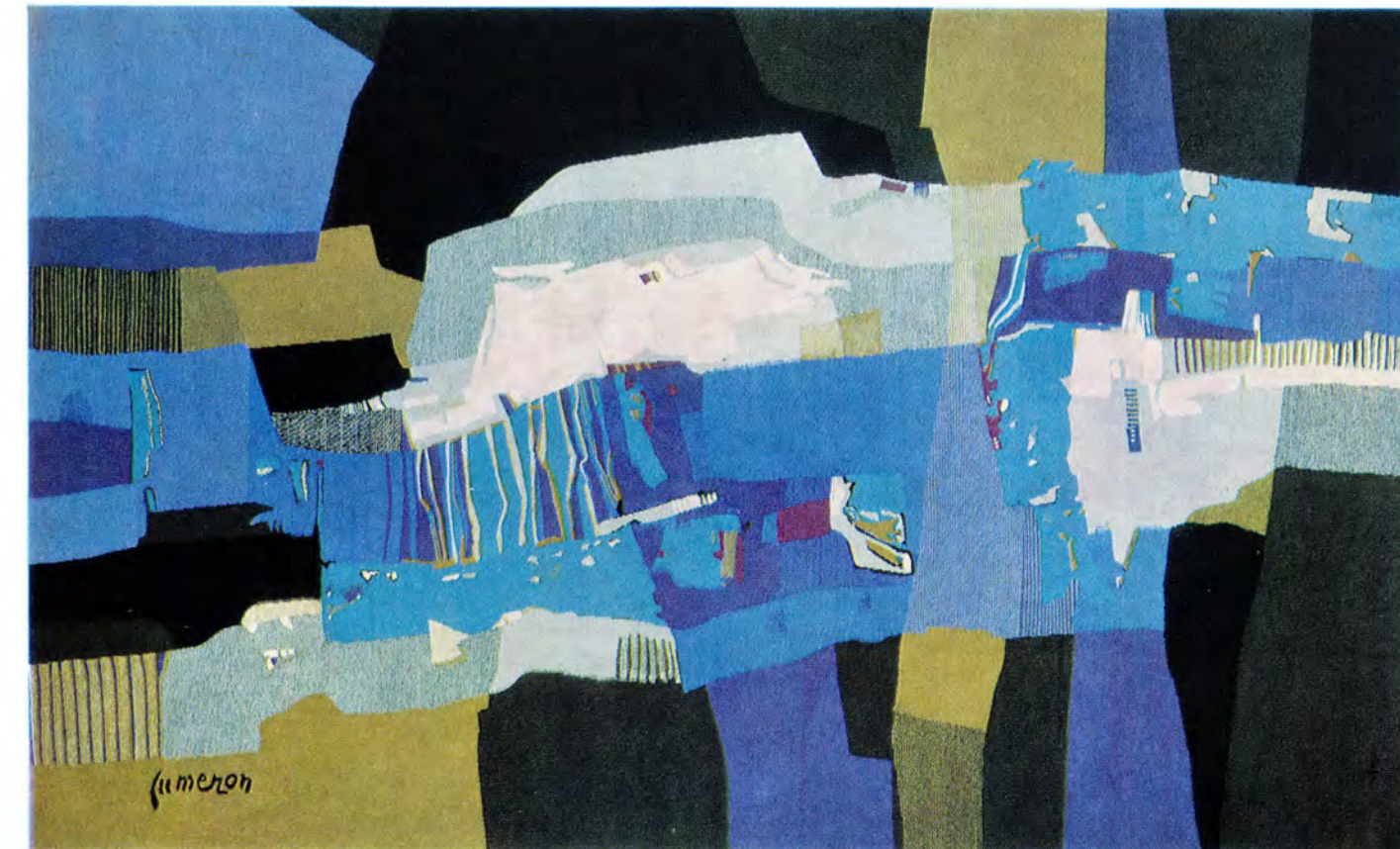
**4**  
**Creve Coeur**  
68¾ x 108¼

**5**  
**Acapuico**  
65 x 114¾

**6**  
**Aqualune**  
41¾ x 61

**7**  
**Lun chaud**  
59 x 37¾

*Rene Fumeron: Sideral (Cat. No 3)*



*"The destiny of modern tapestry is clear—it is the mural of our times. We are nomads living in apartment blocks and we change apartments as our family requirements dictate . . . and when we move from one place to another we cannot take with us murals that are painted on our walls. But a woollen wall of tapestry can be taken down at any time and taken with us."*

*Le Corbusier*

## Mathieu Mategot

Born in 1910 at Tapio-Sully in Hungary, now a nationalized Frenchman, and a Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters. Studied at the School of Fine Arts and at the Academy Jaschick in Budapest, and was first a theatre designer. In 1931 he settled in France where he carried out important decorative

works; in 1939 he became interested in tapestry. He volunteered at the outbreak of war and was a prisoner for four years. When he returned in 1943, he continued his interest in tapestry and completed many cartoons. Through his own research and experiment he has been responsible for major changes in the methods of weaving

employed at Aubusson. In 1950 the French Government bought the tapestry "Metamorphoses" and in 1958 commissioned a large hanging in the National Gobelins factory at Orly. Mategot has the distinction of designing the largest tapestry, woven in one piece, in the world. It

hangs in the new Prefecture in Caen and covers approximately 756 sq. ft. Many other Government and private commissions have followed throughout the world, including four monumental tapestries commissioned by the Commonwealth of Australia for the National Library in Canberra.



Mathieu Mategot: Adagio (Cat. No 8)

8

**Adagio** (*illustrated*)

58¼ x 41¾

9

**Ala II**

59 x 39¾

10

**Algues des Profondeurs**

48 x 89¾

11

**Arunta**

59 x 39¾

12

**Bouquet de Corail**

67¾ x 86¾

46

13

**Colombo II**

89¾ x 71¾

14

**Cosmorama**

86¾ x 157½

15

**Envoutement**

69¼ x 59

16

**Karra Mala**

75¾ x 61

17

**Karate**

63¾ x 55¼

18

**Kowloon**

82¾ x 70¾

19

**Lueurs dans La Nuit**

69¾ x 84¾

20

**Lumiere Aquatique**

67¾ x 87¾

21

**Minera**

44¾ x 69¾

22

**Mocca**

58¼ x 39¾

23

**Moment Supreme**

49¼ x 96½

24

**Oiseau de Feu**

78¾ x 100¼

25

**Ombre et Lumiere**

76¾ x 81¾

26

**L'Oiseau de Lumiere**

98 x 196

27

**L'or**

72 x 129

28

**Le Port**

109½ x 120

29

**Recifs**

59 x 138

30

**Santa Barbara II**

82¼ x 114¾

31

**Soleil de Tijuana**

78¾ x 84¾

32

**Vegetation Marine**

62¼ x 46½

33

**Vera Cruz** (*illustrated*)

91¼ x 96½



John Coburn: *In Praise of the Sun* (Cat. No 34)

### John Coburn

Born Ingham, Queensland, 1925. Studied at East Sydney Technical College after war service with the Royal Australian Navy. Diploma in painting 1950. Won Blake Prize for religious art in 1960. Represented in most Australian Art Galleries.

34

**In Praise of the Sun**  
*(illustrated)*

75 x 69

35

**Temple**

67 x 69

36

**Genesis**

67 x 75

### Carl Plate

Born Perth, Western Australia 1909. Studied at East Sydney Technical College. Travelled in America and Mexico in 1935 and studied at St. Martins School and Central School of Arts and Crafts, London. Worked for some time as an advertising designer. Visited Scandinavia and Russia in 1940.

Represented in several Australian State collections.

37

**Blue Monument**

78 x 52

38

**Story**

63 x 77

### Rollin Schlicht

Born Ocean Island (Gilberts) 1937. In 1952 went to England and from 1959-1965 studied at Kingston Art School, London, qualifying as an architect. Came to Australia 1966 and has exhibited in group shows in Sydney and Melbourne, holding his first one-man show in Sydney in 1967 at the Central Street Gallery.

39

**Miller IV**

71 x 51

40

**Trice**

71 x 71

### **Exhibition Itinerary**

Adelaide 9 March to 7 April  
Hobart 26 April to 26 May  
Perth 14 June to 14 July  
Sydney 2 August to 1 September  
Brisbane 13 September to 13 October

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