

Artist's Quote



"I applied streaks and blobs of colors onto the canvas with a palette knife, and I made them sing with all the intensity I could. Color provokes a psychic vibration. Color hides a power still unknown but real, which acts on every part of the human body."

~ *Wassily Kandinsky*

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Publisher's Note

I start with a note of apology for the delayed publication of our last issue. This delay cannot be attributed to any technical factor. Rather it was for the sudden onset of the third wave of the Covid pandemic which enforced us to a somewhat *go slow* mode. Among the various interesting and informative articles in this issue, the one especially to be mentioned is that from our German artist friend, Philipp. He has given a vivid description of the recent exhibition of Kiefer at the temporary building of *Grand Palais Ephemere*, while the original building is being renovated. Anselm Kiefer is a highly respected and successful contemporary artist of the present times, who without any doubt can be compared to Picasso. I was fortunate to visit his retrospective exhibition in France. His 30×40 ft high artworks which were mostly frottage, were done using all throw away materials like tin, sand, broken plates, lead etc. had impressed me to a great extent. Through his paintings he speaks of the profound cruelties, war and horror of the *Nazis* in Europe and other historical catastrophes. His sculptures were also extraordinary specially the one where he has represented various war testimonials and holocaust documents on metallic medium. His use of huge spectrum of medium and variation of artwork is always a great inspiration to the young generation of artists.

Another interesting article based on Indian history will surely create interest among you. Soma Bhowmik introduces us to some of ancient India's sculptures and architectures in first part of her article. We will continue with the final part of this in our following issue. Suroopa brings you the details of the exhibition *Intimate Chronicles* at Ganges art gallery, where a group of young enthusiastic talents have exhibited their work.

Among our regular sections, we introduce you to the art world of the painter and activist Anil Karanjai, who with his able wife were very much active in various movements. I personally knew him and admired his contribution to the field of art especially the surrealistic influence in his work.

Just when I am penning down this column, I received the shocking news regarding the loss of our three esteemed fellow men from the field of art. Eminent artist and social activist Sri Wasim Kapoor, noted cartoonist and illustrator, Sri Narayan Debnath and painter Sri Nikhilesh Das. This is no doubt a great loss to the painter fraternity. We pay our heartfelt tribute to their departed souls in this issue.

Readers/subscribers, we are trying in our way to make Art Fact an interesting read for you, but would also request you to kindly send us your views and suggestions for the same.

Shuvaprasanna

Anselm Kiefer in Paris: *Pour Paul Celan* Philipp Grieb

At the personal request of President Emmanuel Macron, the temporary Grand Palais Éphémère opened for an exhibition by Anselm Kiefer: "Pour Paul Celan" - a privilege for the artist, who is highly respected in France, and a tribute to the German-speaking poet with French citizenship. The exhibition from 16 Dec 2021 to 11 Jan 2022 served as a cultural prelude to the start of the French EU Presidency from January.

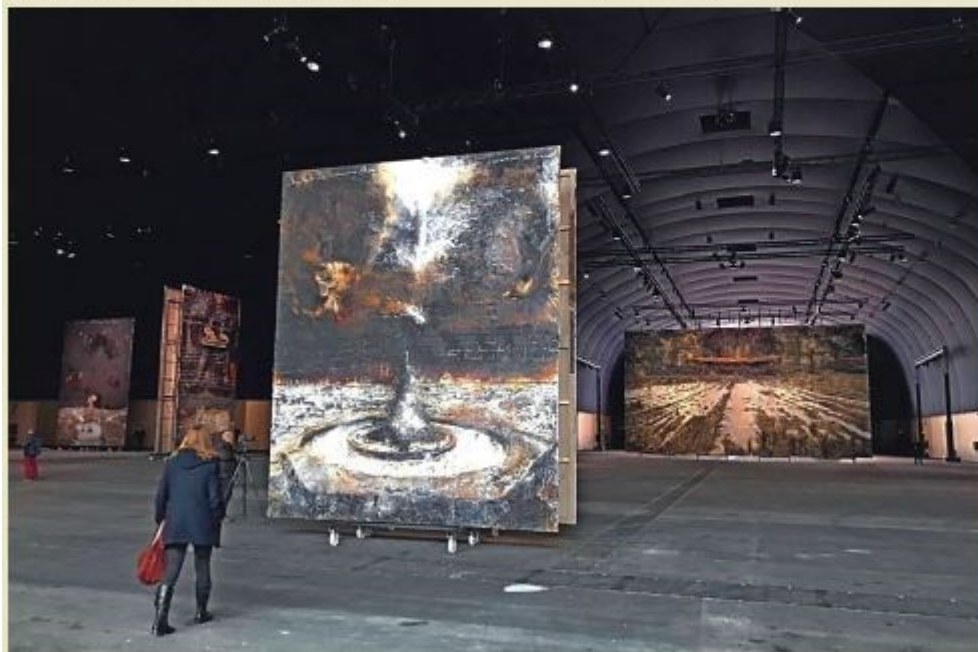
The Grand Palais Éphémère is a temporary building for a period of renovation of the actual Grand Palais in Paris. In 2024, the huge temporary arena will serve as the venue for the judo and wrestling competitions of the Olympic Games. The huge space looks overwhelming with its floor space of 10,000 square meters under the 20-metre-high vaulted roofs, the enormous windows at the ends with views of the Eiffel Tower and the military school. Darkness reigned; only the 23 works of art were illuminated, impressive among them the huge formats of the paintings by 76-year-old Anselm Kiefer.



Grand Palais Éphémère, Paris (Photo: Wiki Commons)

History painter of the modern era

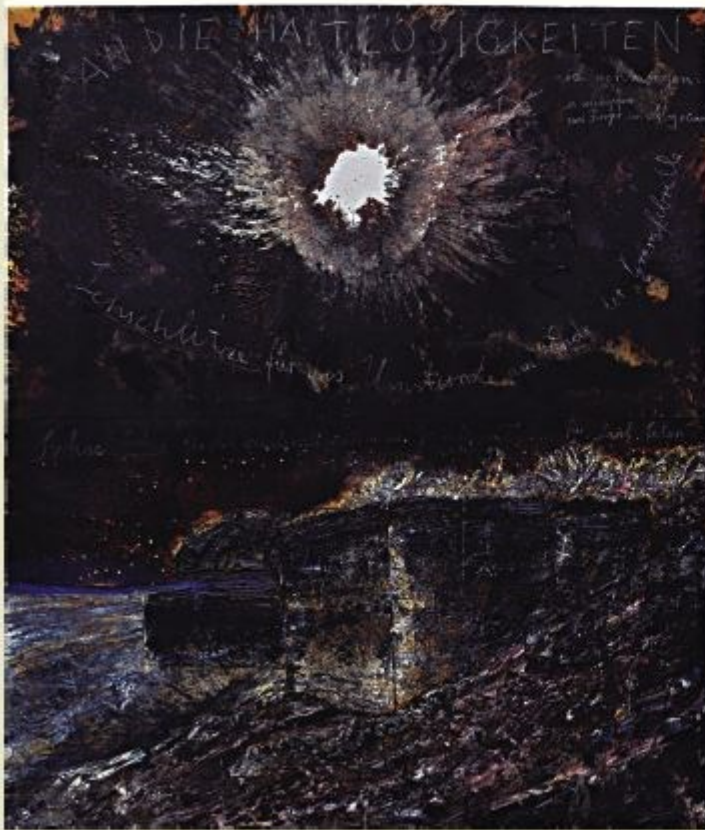
In his monumental works, Kiefer deals profoundly with the cruelties, war and horror of the Nazis in Europe and other historical catastrophes. At school he had already studied Paul Celan and his poem "Todesfuge" (Death Fugue). He inserted quotations from it into his paintings. The pictorial word creations of the German-language poet Paul Celan, son of Jewish parents and Holocaust survivor, have been an inspiration



View into the exhibition Anselm Kiefer: "Pour Paul Celan" (Photo: Andreas Plattbaus)

for Kiefer since the 1980s. In addition to oil and acrylic paints, his working media include organic materials such as clay, ash, gypsum and plants, ferns, flowers and animal preparations. He also uses materials such as lead, concrete, wire, steel, glass and found objects, historical tools and equipment. The artist often inserts black-and-white photographs into his paintings and installations, some of them gigantic, taken by him and developed in his own studio. In elaborate working processes, Anselm Kiefer exposes his works to the elemental forces of wind, water and fire, so that the patina of nature appears on the surface of the works.

International News



Anselm Kiefer: *An die Haltlosigkeiten (To the haltless)*, 2021
(Photo: Georges Poncet)

In the paintings and sculptures, abstract but also figurative compositions evolve from diverse objects and materials, critically reflecting history and telling stories in their emotional impact.

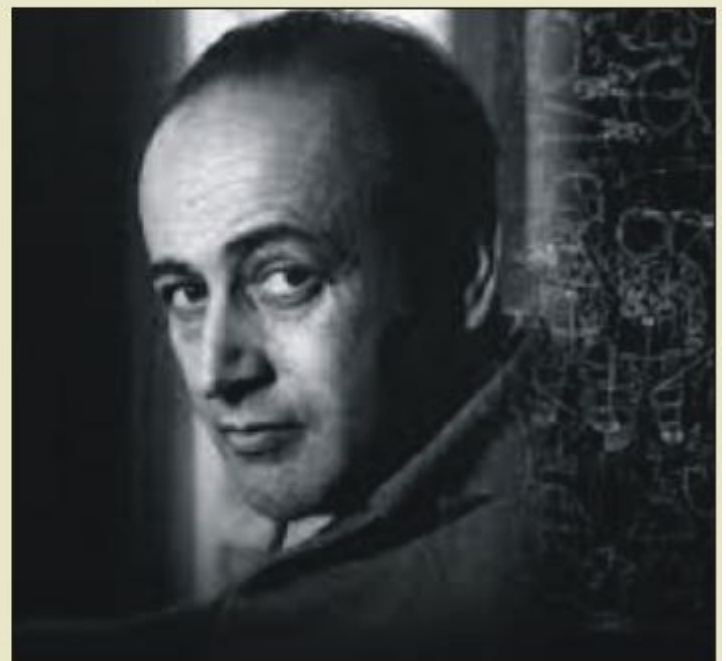
Anselm Kiefer was born and raised in southwest Germany. Initially he worked in the region. Later in 1992 he left Germany and moved into a large former factory site near Barjac in the south of France. A period of frequent travel all over the world (USA, Thailand, Australia and Indonesia) followed. In 1993, he visited India and East Asia, and came to India in 1996 again and to North Africa, where he was particularly interested in pyramids and architectonic ruins. The myths of the Judeo-Christian, Egyptian, Indian and Far Eastern cultures are sources of his interpretation of the world and motifs for the depiction of the incomprehensible. From these he develops dark poetries of the past time, of passing and melancholy.

In 2007, he moved his activities to the vicinity of Paris, working in huge halls in the region and the city. France has been his adopted country for three decades. The tense field of Franco-German history, which has seen many wars and cruel violence over centuries, offers many themes for the reminding illustrator of horror.

In Germany, until the early 1980s art critics were rejective of Kiefer. Only with the growing recognition abroad, especially in Israel and the USA, did the reception in Germany change. Today, Kiefer is considered one of the world's most important contemporary artists. The influential art critic Robert Hughes called him "the best painter of his generation on either side of the Atlantic" and "the modern incarnation of the grand-scale history painter" (in *TIME* magazine, 21 Dec. 1987). K. O. Knausgaard called him "the greatest living artist" (in *New York Times Magazine* 22 Feb. 2020).

Paul Celan, poet of the indescribable

Paul Celan (1920-1970), who grew up in Czernowitz, formerly in Romania, now in Ukraine, migrated to France in 1948. At the age of 18, he first came to Tours to study for a year, but then he returned. He and his parents were caught up in the persecution of the Jewish population by Romanian and German troops from 1940, which his parents did not survive. He escaped deportation and fled first to Vienna and in 1948 to Paris, where he married in 1952 and received French citizenship in 1955. Literary successes and personal crises accompanied his life until his early death. Today, his literary legacy enjoys great worldwide recognition. "His world-literary impact consists in the fact that he wrote in a language that went through the horrors of the Holocaust without the illusion of being able to write about the millions of victims with the means of a figurative realism," stated Wolfgang Emmerich, the German cultural scientist.



Paul Celan, 1945 (Photo: Wiki Commons)