

# Arman

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Paris Art  
Studies - Arman 1928 - 2005

1928 - Born Armand Pierre Fernandez in Nice. His father was an antique dealer (brocanteur) and amateur cellist of Spanish-Algerian origin and his mother Marguerite Jacquet a farmer's daughter from the Loire. As a child he showed a precocious talent for painting. From his father he inherited a passion for collecting, common objects like watches, weapons or pens but also African tribal art of which he became a very fine connoisseur.

1947-49 - He studied at the Ecole Nationale des Arts Décoratifs in Nice (whose conservatism he loathed) before moving to Paris to study the history of art at the Ecole du Louvre. His earliest work is abstract painting in the style of Nicolas de Stael and Poliakoff. He travelled widely through Europe with his Nice friends Claude Pascale and Yves Klein. Among his early passions were Far Eastern philosophy, Rosicrucianism, astrology and judo (like Klein). He served for two years in the French army in Fréjus.

1953 &ndash; Marries musician Eliane Radigue with whom he will have 3 children (Marion, Anne and Yves). Discovers African tribal art for the first time in an exhibition at the Hotel Georges V in Paris.

1954 &ndash; Discovers the collages of Kurt Schwitters in a show at the Berggruen gallery in Paris and also Jackson Pollock.

1955 &ndash; Works as furniture and car salesman. Abandons painting in favor of stamping paper or canvas in "automatic" gestures. First solo show of gouaches in London.

1956 &ndash; First solo show in Paris at the Galerie du Haut Pavé.

1957 &ndash; Since his youth he was inspired by Vincent Van Gogh and like Vincent he signs his work with his first name only. Begins stamping his paintings with various objects dipped in paint: "allures d'objets".

1958 – First exhibition with Iris Clert in Paris. Adopts the name “Arman” after a printer’s misspelling of his first name on the exhibition announcement.

1959 – Begins the “Garbage” (“Poubelles”) and “Accumulation” series using detritus and manufactured objects as elements for sculpture.

1960 – Signs the New Realist manifesto under the direction of art critic Pierre Restany, with fellow artists Yves Klein, Jean Tinguely, François Dufrêne, Raymond Hains, Martial Raysse (a fellow Niçois), Daniel Spoerri, Jacques Villeglé, joined later by César, Mimmo Rotella, Niki de Saint Phalle, Christo and Gérard

Deschamps. He uses Plexiglas for the first time to encase his accumulations. “Full Up” (“Le Plein”) is his landmark exhibition of the year at the Iris Clert gallery in Paris, an audacious installation of garbage filling up the entire gallery in contrast to Yves Klein’s famous “Vide” (“Empty”) exhibition of 1958.

1961 – Beginning of the “Colères” (“Angers”) composed of objects smashed by the artist and then re-assembled on wooden panels. These will be followed by his “coupes” (“slices”) the clean “slicing” of manufactured objects. Begins spending half the year in New York alternating with Nice and after 1967, Venice.

1963 – Beginning of the “Combustions” objects set ablaze whose charred remains are re-gathered and displayed under Plexiglas. First solo show at the Sidney Janis gallery in New York. In Essen explodes with dynamite an MG car belonging to German photographer Charles Wip who films the operation.

1964 – First solo museum show at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis and Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam.

1967 – Arman settles in the celebrated Chelsea hotel in New York before moving to his own loft in SoHo in 1970. Separation with his wife.

1970 – Exhibits new sculptures created in collaboration with the Renault car manufacturers at the World Fair in Osaka, Japan. Publicly supports the Black Panther movement in the USA.

1971 – Marries a black American young woman, Corice Canton with whom he will have 2 children (Yasmine and Philippe).

1973 – Takes up American citizenship adopting a new name, Armand P. Arman.

1975 – Smashes  
up a reconstituted middle class apartment in the John Gibson gallery in New York

– a “happening” titled “Conscious  
Vandalism”.

1982 – Creation of “Long Term  
parking”, a monumental sculpture 50 foot high of concrete with  
encased cars for the Paris suburb of Jouy-en-Josas.

1985 – Arman moves to his own building in TriBeCa in New  
York. Monumental sculpture of cellos cast in bronze for New York,  
“Rostopovich’s tower”. Two public sculptures for Paris, an accumulation of  
clocks “L’Heure de tous”; and luggage, “Consigne à vie” for the Gare St Lazare.

1989 – Birth of his last child  
(outside marriage), Yves César.

1990 – Arman  
cancels a major retrospective at the museum of Nice, his home town, after the  
mayor welcomes a convention of the French extreme right party, the Front National.

1995 – Creation of “Hope for peace”; a 30 meter high monumental column of  
encrusted armoured vehicles and tanks for Beirut, commissioned by Prime  
Minister Rafik Hariri.

1998 – Retrospective exhibition at the Jeu de Paume in  
Paris travels on until 2001 to Germany, Portugal, Israel, Brazil,  
Mexico, Taiwan, Spain.

1999 – Accumulation of Ferraris  
cast in red bronze for car race circuit in Italy.

2002 – Arman  
retrospective exhibition in Nice. The  
“Serious paintings”; combine musical instruments with paint.

2005 – Arman  
dies in New York.

Arman’s paintings and sculptures by type:

1955:

Cachets répétitifs (&ldquo;repetitive stamps&rdquo;)

1959:

Allures d&rsquo;objets (&ldquo;object traces&rdquo;) - Accumulations - Poubelles (&ldquo;garbage&rdquo;)

1961:

Colères (&ldquo;wraths&rdquo;) - Relief

Portaits &ndash; Coupes (&ldquo;slices&rdquo;)

1975:

Conscious Vandalism

1984:

The Day After

1987:

Transculptures

1988:

Dirty Paintings

1989:

Shooting Colors

1990:

Atlantis

1993:

Accumulations de Collections

1994:

Accumulations en relation

1996:

Les Interactives

2002:

Serious Paintings