PROANTIC
LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

Ben Vautier (1935 - 2024) -- A Huge Orgy, 2001



16 000 EUR

Signature : BEN Vautier

Period : 20th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Acrylic

Description

A huge orgy, 2001 Acrylic on canvas, signed lower right. 50 x 61 cm

Provenance: Private collection, southern France. Ben Vautier: Everything is art, especially life Ben Vautier, better known as Ben, was born on July 18, 1935, in Naples, and died on June 5, 2024, in Nice. A free, provocative, and unclassifiable artist, he made his entire life a work of art. A major figure of the 20th-century French avant-garde, he always claimed that anything could become art, as long as one dared to say it, do it, or simply sign it. Born into a family of Swiss and Irish origin, Ben grew up in several Mediterranean countries--Italy, Turkey, Egypt--before settling in Nice in the late 1940s. This cosmopolitan childhood very early on nourished his reflections on identity, language,

Dealer

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and cultural diversity, which would permeate all of his work. In 1958, he opened "le Magazin" in Nice, a shop where he sold used records, unusual objects, and his first artistic creations. This place quickly became a space for experimentation, exhibitions, and the constant questioning of the status of art. Ben developed an original line of thought there, which he would later call ego art, centered on self-affirmation as an artistic gesture. Influenced by Marcel Duchamp, Dada, John Cage, and Yves Klein, Ben joined the Fluxus movement in the 1960s, an international collective advocating an art free from conventions, the spectacular, and even the "beautiful." He then multiplied performances, happenings, and actions where everything--the word, the gesture, the silence, the accident--became material for creation. He tirelessly questions: What is art? Who decides? Why this and not that? His emblematic style is his writings in white on a black background, short, dazzling aphorisms, which are both provocative and popular philosophy: "Everything is art," "I am a liar," "Art is saying that it is art," "This sentence is a painting." Ben also actively defends minority languages, regional cultures, and anti-centralization ideas. His commitment, sometimes controversial, is always driven by a conviction: critical thinking must be free, vibrant, and unafraid of judgment. His works have been exhibited worldwide, from Documenta in Kassel to the Venice Biennale, and a major retrospective was dedicated to him at the Centre Pompidou in 2001. He remained deeply attached to Nice throughout his life, where his home-studio became a work in itself, saturated with words, panels, and phrases painted on walls, objects, and furniture. Until his death, Ben never stopped writing, painting, signing, and challenging. He opened lasting breaches in the art world, showing that the essential thing is not to produce objects, but to circulate ideas, to disturb certainties, to provoke thought. Ben leaves behind a dense, free, radical, and profoundly human body of work. He

transformed doubt into a method, words into matter, and existence into art. Discover more of this artist's works on the gallery's website: https://www.galeriepentcheff.fr/fr/peintre-ben-vautier